

DON MIGUEL

BY

E. S. Van Zile

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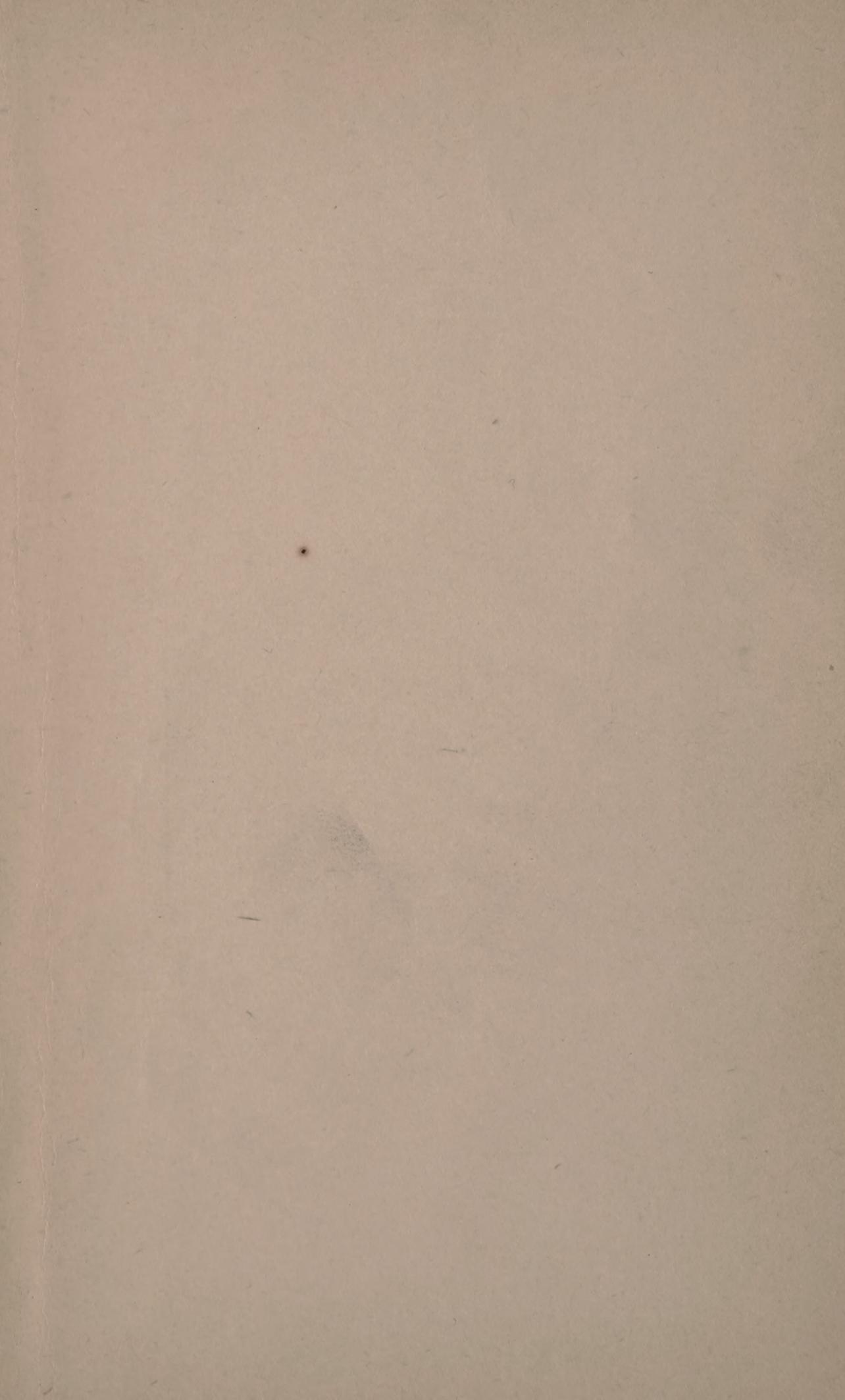
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# DON MIGUEL

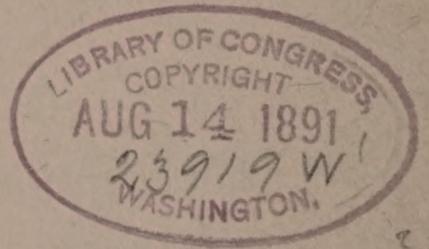
*AND OTHER STORIES*

BY ✓

EDWARD S. VAN ZILE

AUTHOR OF "WANTED A SENSATION," "A MAGNETIC MAN,"  
"THE LAST OF THE VAN SLACKS," ETC.

35



NEW YORK

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TO  
WALTER P. PHILLIPS

THIS BOOK  
IS CORDIALLY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR.



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# DON MIGUEL.

*A STORY OF TO-DAY.*

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## PART I.

“YOU must acknowledge, Daisy, that he is handsome. He is *such* a relief from the commonplace American who dresses like an Englishman and talks like last week’s funny paper. There is something quite romantic about Don Miguel. I think even your father was impressed with him.”

Mrs. Alonzo B. Richards, well known to the society reporters of the metropolitan newspapers, leaned back in her chair and gazed triumphantly at her younger daughter, who was seated near her at the piano. Mrs. Richards always considered it a great victory to awaken any sign of emotion in her husband, and she had been pleased at dinner to

see that he had shown considerable curiosity regarding her guest, Don Miguel Mendoza of Spain. Daisy, a handsome girl, with light hair and dark blue eyes, smiled sarcastically at her mother's words.

"Yes, he has some claims to beauty, of the dark, mysterious kind. I don't think I admire the style, but I have no doubt that he pleased Violet."

She turned toward her sister, a tall, queenly woman, who had been walking about the drawing-room nervously. Violet Richards was a reigning belle. She resembled her mother in feature and her father in her cold and unimpassioned ways. But in her dark eyes there was a suppressed enthusiasm which proved that if this black-haired woman ever lost control of herself the effect would be volcanic in its aspects.

"Yes, Daisy," she said quietly, seating herself on a divan, "I always like a man who seems to possess reserved power."

"Yes, indeed, doesn't he, though?" broke in a small, thin-faced, carefully dressed wo-

man, of more years than she cared to own, who had been unwontedly silent since they had left the dining-room to the smokers. "He seems to embody all the picturesque traditions of his native land. He reminds me of castles imbedded in roses, of Moors roaming about and fighting with Ferdinand and Isabella, of fountains in the Alhambra, of the music of guitars, and—and—of——"

"Garlic and bull-fights, Miss Martin," suggested Daisy mischievously.

"I am ashamed of you, Daisy," broke in Violet. "If nothing else can restrain you, you should remember that Don Miguel is our guest."

"How *can* I forget that, Vi? I have heard nothing but 'Don Miguel' for two days. Ever since mamma met him at the Robinsons, you and she have talked of no one else. I am beginning to look at everything from a Spanish standpoint. I really believe that you think Adam was a Spaniard, and wooed Eve with 'reserved power.' I'll begin to walk Spanish, pretty soon."

“I am shocked, Daisy,” exclaimed Mrs. Richards. “Where *do* you pick up so much slang?”

“It comes direct from Wall Street, mamma,” answered Violet maliciously.

“At all events, it’s American,” retorted Daisy. “I am a patriotic daughter of the New World, mamma. The reason I admire Columbus is because he left Spain and came to this country.”

“But he went back again,” suggested her sister.

“Yes, and when he got back he died.”

“Hush, girls,” exclaimed Miss Martin impressively. “I think I hear them stirring in the dining-room.”

“No,” returned Daisy, striking a few bars on the piano. “it’s Don Miguel’s cigar. It’s such a very strong one, you know. By the way, mamma, do all Spanish grandees wear gloves at meals? I was waiting for the Don to remove his, but he kept them on all through dinner. I really must say I don’t like the custom. It may be Spanish, but it isn’t pretty.”

“Perhaps,” remarked Miss Martin, “he has made a romantic vow of some kind. You know they’re always doing that kind of thing over there.”

“Daisy loves this land of freedom so well,” suggested Violet, “that she might ask the Don why he never removes his gloves. If he looks annoyed she could recite the Declaration of Independence to him.”

At this moment four gentlemen entered the room. Don Miguel Mendoza, who had been the subject of so much gossip, was the most striking figure of the quartette. He was somewhat above medium height and strongly built. There was more power than grace in his frame. His face was brilliantly handsome. Dark hair and eyes, an olive complexion, with a faint tinge of red in the cheeks, a voluptuous mouth, and white, even teeth formed a striking combination. The lines of the nose were not as delicate as an artist might have wished, nor were his ears well cut. But the general effect of his appearance was dazzling. There were youth, health,

vigor, and passion in his face, and when he smiled there was an irresistible fascination about him. He was faultlessly attired, the only peculiar feature of his evening costume being the white gloves which had awakened Daisy's scorn.

The other members of the group were Mr. Alonzo B. Richards, a gray-haired, square-faced man, with cold, stern eyes; General Stagg, of the United States army, a red-cheeked veteran who looked healthy and happy and rather picturesque in his dazzling uniform; and Mr. Ernest Forbes, a Wall Street broker, with gray hair and a youthful countenance.

"Don Miguel promised to sing for us," exclaimed Daisy, springing up from the piano stool, and thinking that now, at least, the Spaniard would have to remove his gloves.

"It would give me great pleasure, Miss Daisy," said Don Miguel rather solemnly, as he approached her. Then turning to Violet, he asked: "You will play my accompaniment, Miss Richards?"

“Checkmated,” whispered Daisy mournfully to Mr. Forbes, as Violet seated herself at the instrument. “Is there no way to make him take off those gloves?”

“You might drug him and do it by force,” suggested the broker.

Don Miguel’s voice was a baritone of great compass. He sang with the ease and precision of one who has had instruction from the best teachers. There was a vibrant melancholy in his tones which was due in part to the *motif* of his song and in part to a mysterious element in his nature which seemed to find relief in music. As he stood beside Violet, those who saw them were struck by the beauty of the picture. Their dark, mobile faces bore the same expression of mingled pleasure and pain. As the soft, velvety Spanish rolled from his lips, sometimes pleading, sometimes sorrowful, Violet’s countenance reflected every meaning of his tone. Their spirits seemed to join in the harmony of poetry and song.

There was a murmur of applause as the

Don's song came to an end. Even Daisy smiled in honest approval, while Miss Martin looked ecstatically toward General Stagg, as if to inform him that she was still young enough to vibrate with emotion.

"Mr. Forbes and I are going to play billiards," remarked Daisy. "Would anybody like to join us?"

"How crudely she sometimes speaks," murmured Mrs. Richards to herself.

"If Miss Martin will become my ally," remarked the general, "I should be glad to shoulder a cue."

"I have promised to show Don Miguel the conservatory," said Violet, rising and moving away on his arm.

A moment later Mr. Richards and his wife were left alone.

"How do you like the Spaniard, Alonzo?" asked Mrs. Richards anxiously, as her husband drew a chair toward her.

"O, very well, for a novelty."

"You are so reserved, Alonzo! But don't you think him very elegant in appearance?"

Mr. Richards smiled coldly. "What a thorough woman's question. The most elegant man in looks I ever knew cheated me out of twenty thousand dollars." Mrs. Richards, to use a colloquialism, was "stumped."

"Did he—did he—look like Don Miguel?" she faltered.

"Not at all, my dear; not at all. He was very different in style. But I have learned, Mrs. Richards, to beware of what are called handsome men. It is not a man's face which counts for much in these days, but his figure—his figure at his banker's, I mean."

"How materialistic you are, Alonzo. But don't you think it would be well to ask the Don up to 'Mountainview' for a few days? General Stagg, Miss Martin, and Mr. Forbes are coming. Violet ought to have a *vis-à-vis*, especially as she always complains of the dullness of the country."

"I don't agree with you, my dear," returned her husband, with more earnestness than he had yet shown. "We know very little about this Spaniard. He seems to be a

gentleman, but I don't want Violet to marry a foreigner. So give up your castle in Spain, Mrs. Richards, and let the matter drop."

At that moment Violet and the Don entered the drawing-room from the conservatory. The young woman's cheeks glowed, and the light in her eyes convinced her father that his decision had been right. He had never seen so much animation in his daughter's face before.

"I feel as though I had been to Spain for a moment," remarked the Don to Mrs. Richards. "Your flowers have brought my native land near to me, and, I assure you, the presence of Miss Richards did not destroy the illusion."

Violet smiled, and stole a glance at her image in a mirror.

"You return to Spain soon?" asked Mr. Richards, looking at the Don rather sternly.

"No, no. I shall remain in New York for a long time."

Don Miguel seated himself on a chair close to Mr. Richards. "I like your city and your

people. Having no near relatives at home I am restless and prefer new friends to old acquaintances."

"So did the man who swindled me," thought Mr. Richards, looking toward his wife, who was talking to Violet at the other end of the apartment.

"Then, again," continued the Don, "I am becoming interested in American securities. I have a large amount of money to invest and I am trying to place it here to advantage."

Mr. Richards's face changed. There was more life in his eyes, a tinge of red in his cheeks, and he looked at the Spaniard with a return of cordiality.

"Ah! Is it so? If I can be of any service to you, sir, it would give me great pleasure."

"I thank you from my heart, Mr. Richards. I am convinced that you could aid me greatly."

"We go to our country house up the Hudson to-morrow," remarked the host, weighing his words carefully. "We will remain there

all summer. If you are at leisure next week, it would give us great satisfaction to number you among our guests. The scenery and air are fine, but there is little to do, you know. Can you spare us a few days?"

"You are very kind, sir. Nothing would give me so much delight."

The Don said these words impressively, and unconsciously his eyes turned to Violet, who was coming forward by her mother's side.

"Don Miguel," remarked Mr. Richards, rising, "has kindly promised to visit us next week at 'Mountainview.' I tell him he will find the place very quiet, but he does not seem to mind that."

Mrs. Richards, a thorough woman of the world, had looked surprised for a moment, but controlled her face and said:

"I am delighted, Don Miguel, and trust you won't be too much bored."

"Indeed, madam, I look forward to a most joyful experience." He glanced at Violet, as though expecting her to indorse her parent's

invitation. He was disappointed, however, for she remained silent, though a faint flush had mounted to her cheeks.

The sound of laughter echoed from the hall, and the billiard players entered the room.

“We have met the enemy and we are theirs,” remarked General Stagg, glancing mournfully at Miss Martin, who was leaning on his arm.

“Miss Daisy was the hero—or rather heroine—of the encounter,” added Mr. Forbes. “She made a great run—of two points.”

“Sarcastic wretch!” returned Daisy. “I will never play with you again.”

“Ha,” cried the general, “discontent in the enemy’s camp! We will have our revenge yet, Miss Martin.”

Meanwhile Don Miguel had been making his adieux.

“We will see you Monday, then?” were Mr. Richards’s parting words to his guest.

“Thank you—yes. I bid you all good-night.” With a sweeping bow which seemed

to salute the entire party, but, at the same time, distinguish Violet above the rest, the Don left the room.

“Did you catch a glimpse of the Spaniard?” asked Daisy of a handsome, dark-haired woman, with the features of a quadroon, an hour later. Eliza, the housekeeper, made a pet of Daisy, and always arranged her hair for her at night.

—“Yes. He is a handsome man, is he not, Miss Daisy? And so he is coming to ‘Mountainview’?”

“Yes, I suppose so. I don’t know what mamma and papa mean by asking him. He is such a stranger, don’t you know. But, Eliza, I want you to promise me something. Mr. Forbes and I have got a strange theory about his gloves. We think he wears them always because—because—well, never mind. But while he is with us I want you to look at his hands. You are full of expedients and will have a better chance to discover his secret than any one else. Will you try?”

“Certainly, Miss Daisy. You know I

would do anything to please you. But I am sure I don't know how I can accomplish your scheme. He looks like a man whose anger, if aroused, would be terrible."

"Oh, but you mustn't give him a chance to lose his temper. He must never know that anybody has seen his hands. Don't you understand?"

"I think I do. At all events, I'll do the best I can. Good-night."

"Good-night, Eliza."

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PART II.

THE Hudson flowed by the wooded hills and swept onward in grand curves toward the distant sea. The legendary mountains where Hendrik Hudson and his specter men rolled tenpins in the storm and drugged old Rip Van Winkle, where Katrina Van Tassel lived and died, and the school-master of Sleepy-Hollow took his weird midnight ride, towered heavenward opposite the New York

millionaire's country seat. It was early summer and the green tints of the landscape told that the spring had been warm and wet. "Mountainview" was a charming place. The house, though modern, was not oppressively new. Alonzo B. Richards had built the place about ten years ago, shortly after he had "cornered" a certain railroad stock. Its solid and dignified appearance, therefore, was not due to age, but to a studied effort on the part of its owner to give the place an air of aristocratic maturity.

The trees on the lawn were ancient and impressive, the flower beds had long abandoned the gaudy frivolities of youth; and about the entire establishment there was a restful look, in keeping with its character as a summer retreat.

The sun was setting in golden grandeur behind the Catskills one evening about ten days after the events recorded in the last chapter. Upon the broad piazza of "Mountainview" were gathered the Richards family and their guests. The glories of the scene

before them had impressed them all, and even Daisy had been silent for a while.

"We have the background for romance in our country, Don Miguel," remarked Miss Martin; "but, being a commonplace people, the setting lacks its jewel."

"Excuse me, Miss Martin, but I differ with you," said General Stagg, rather sternly. "We are not a commonplace people, and in no land in the world are the elements of romance so plentiful."

Don Miguel, who was seated near Violet, rolled a cigarette and looked at the old soldier inquiringly.

"In the first place," continued the general, "the varied types which pertain to our mixed population offer striking contrasts. In New York I have sometimes heard six or eight different languages spoken during a morning walk. Our streets are full of picturesque figures. What the metropolis needs is a novelist who will possess something of Dickens, a pinch of Thackeray, and a good deal of Balzac. The raw material is all there.

What is wanted is a genius to make use of it."

"But does not the absence of a recognized system of caste operate as a check to the American writer of fiction?" asked Don Miguel. "In my country, and all through Europe the distinction between *hoi polloi* and *hoi electoi* is of vast benefit to the storyteller."

"That is doubtless so," commented Mr. Richards, who had grown more genial under the influence of mountain air and freedom from the cares of business. "But, as the general says, there are countless elements of romance around us and a few of them are peculiar to our New World civilization. That strange and awful tragedy, our civil war, brought about results which will become a fruitful orchard to the poet and playwright of the future. Already its possibilities have been observed by clever men."

Mrs. Richards, surprised and pleased at her husband's loquacity, broke in: "Have you ever noticed our housekeeper, Don Miguel?"

She is a dark, handsome woman, mother of our butler?"

"Yes. I have seen her once or twice. She is much lighter in complexion than her son." Don Miguel puffed his cigarette nervously.

"Her history illustrates Mr. Richards's remarks," continued the hostess. "She was born a slave. After the war broke out she escaped North, bringing with her two sons, one much darker than herself, the other a good deal lighter. After a time a wealthy New Yorker, struck with the beauty and brightness of the latter, adopted him. The boy was then eight years old. Eliza has never seen him since. She and her other son entered our service several years ago. Sometimes, I think, she wonders what became of her boy, and then she comforts herself with the thought that her sacrifice was made for his benefit. Think of the contrast there would be between the two boys now—one a negro butler, ignorant, faithful, unambitious, and the other reared in luxury, cultured in the schools and by travel, ambitious, perhaps,

and worthy, excepting for his birth, of recognition from the best people of the land. What other country could produce so strange a tale?"

There was silence for a moment. Then Daisy, smiling at Mr. Forbes, who was smoking a cigar by her side, remarked: "That is very pretty, mamma. But probably the adopted boy is dead. Eliza has told me he was very delicate."

Don Miguel arose, somewhat hurriedly, and said:

"Miss Richards, would you like to take a stroll — or is the night wind too cold?"

"I should be delighted," answered Violet, who had taken no part in the conversation. "I will get a wrap."

"She'll get a rap if she doesn't stop flirting with that Spaniard," whispered Daisy to Mr. Forbes.

A moment later Violet and Don Miguel were wandering beneath the melancholy trees. There was a fresh, bracing odor of pine in the

air, and above the mountain-tops the stars had begun to blink.

“You are very silent to-night,” remarked Don Miguel, drawing her arm a little closer to his side.

“I always am in a crowd. I like a duet, but cannot sing in a chorus.” She spoke mockingly, and her smile was cold and distant as she glanced at the Spaniard a moment and then turned her eyes toward the far-off mountains.

Her dark hair made her complexion seem strangely pale in the half-light of the waning day. Her eyes shone like the stars above the distant pines, and her warm, full lips tempted the evening breeze. The faint fragrance of her person intoxicated her *vis-à-vis*, and he seemed to tremble slightly as though with cold.

“You find our climate harsh?” she asked, noting this, and looking at him again, somewhat more cordially.

“Oh, no. There is something in this glorious air that makes one in love with life. The

breeze from those mountain-tops seems to whisper to me of high ambitions, of great deeds done, of a life devoted to a lofty purpose, and crowned with success. I would I were a poet, a painter, a musician, for to-night. I seem to need an outlet for the passionate joy in all created things that has come to me since I first breathed the elixir from those hills."

"Perhaps a cigarette might give you some temporary relief," she remarked, removing her arm from his and seating herself in a secluded summer-house, from which a view of the river could be obtained. He looked rather dazed for a moment, as though the waters of the Hudson had splashed over him, but with the *savoir-faire* of a *mondain* he seated himself near her, deftly rolled a cigarette, and gazed gloomily out upon the night.

They made a striking picture in the gloaming. She was dressed in a simple garment of white mull, with a bunch of carnation roses at her waist. There was a voluptuous at-

mosphere about her, which was intensified by the loneliness and silence of the place. Isolation adds vastly to the charms of a handsome woman.

Don Miguel, half-reclining on a divan of wicker-work, seemed especially designed by nature for the part he there played. He was one of those men who make love gracefully. His dark, peculiar face was of that type that suggests passion while attempting to conceal it. Perhaps that is why he watched the shadowy river, rather than the woman by his side. Her manner had not encouraged him to further confidence. He was too proud to look at her, for he knew his heart was in his eyes, but the night seemed to be throbbing with her presence and the very stars shone brighter as they gazed.

“You accused me of being silent,” remarked Violet at length. “You know our proverb about those who live in glass houses?”

“I am waiting to adjust myself to your mood,” he answered. “I perched on the

mountain-tops, but you would not follow me."

"And you are trying to get down to my level. That is really very kind." She smiled sarcastically.

"You misunderstand me." His face showed that he was pained. "There is a touch of cruelty in your nature."

"Of course there is. I am a woman."

"And, therefore," he said, throwing away his half-smoked cigarette and rolling another, "and, therefore, a coquette."

She laughed outright, rather nervously, perhaps.

"That is a sweeping generality. Do you call Miss Martin a coquette?"

"Why not? But General Stagg is a better witness than I am in Miss Martin's case."

"And what is a coquette, Don Miguel, may I ask?"

He stood up, and leaned against the doorway. His figure to her eyes formed a silhouette against the western sky. He could

see her face, but his was shadowy and unreal from where she sat.

“A coquette? A coquette is a woman who gains a man’s love, and plays with it. A woman who has no pity for the hearts she breaks. She may not realize the anguish she begets; she may not know that love to a strong man is a passion cruel in its force; she may, I say, be unmindful of all this, and yet her fault is great. A coquette—is a woman who admires a thousand men, but *loves* herself.”

There was silence for a time. Then, with the echo of a sob in her voice, Violet faltered: “And you call me a coquette?”

A thrill of triumph coursed through Don Miguel’s veins. Had she answered him in anger, in derision, or with a flippant epigram he would have known that his case was hopeless. He threw himself upon the seat beside her, clasped her in his arms, and cried:

“You love me, Violet! Thank God, you love me!”

Oh, the ecstasy of that moment! The

woman, surprised at her own passion, knew that she loved this man with all the ardor of her soul. Her lips met his in "a long, long kiss, the kiss of youth and love," her arms twined about his neck, and her eyes looked into his with a glance of mingled happiness and pain. For to the heart of a proud woman submission to the man of her choice is never free from sorrow.

---

## PART III.

DON MIGUEL MENDOZA occupied a room overlooking the Hudson. It was after midnight, and he stood at an open window gazing dreamily out upon the fairy-like scene before him. The fresh, aromatic breeze from the mountains fanned his cheeks. The stars winked at him playfully, and nature seemed inclined to sympathize with his joy as an accepted suitor.

But the young man was not grateful. His attitude was one of dejection, and now and then a sigh that was almost a groan escaped

him. What did this mean? Here was a handsome youth, wealthy, cultivated, widely traveled, in perfect health, and just now made rich by the acknowledged love of the most fascinating woman he had ever known. His pulse still throbbed with the fervor of her parting kiss, and his being thrilled with the incense from her dark, rich hair. Still did he not throw his arms toward heaven and thank the Fates for spinning him so fair a web. Far from it. In the dim light he looked like a man whose heart was heavy with its weight of woe, who saw not the gleaming stars, but only the shadows where the dark waters flowed.

Two voices sounded in his ears; the one he had heard that night in its cold monotony, telling her housekeeper's tale; the other that of his benefactor, wild in the delirium of fever—and the two voices told the same story. He, Don Miguel Mendoza, falsely so-called, was Eliza's son. His brother was a black man and a butler.

“Must I suffer for a nation's crime?” he

muttered. "Must the curse that should rest on those who made my ancestors slaves be forced upon *me*? Must I, a man whose mind holds all the learning of the schools, whose heart is as white as the new-fallen snow, who has mingled with the courtiers of the Old World and been called a prince, who has been the pet of fortune, who has wronged no one, who has loved the right, who is a gentleman in all that the word implies—must I sacrifice the happiness of my life, abandon the woman who has given me her heart, because a slight taint of negro blood shows itself in my finger-nails? Great God, how unjust is the world! If the men I have met in the New York clubs had known my origin they would have shunned me as though I had committed crime. And yet they say Don Miguel is a polished cosmopolite. They pay their court to me. They acknowledge my worth as a man. 'Society,' so-called, makes a lion of the slave girl's son. Ha, ha! they have been punished by me for the sin of my father—scion of a haughty race—wrought in

his hot youth. But Violet! Shall my revenge go further and wreck her fair, sweet life? What thought is this? No, a thousand times no! But I cannot give her up. I am rich. I am beloved. Is not that enough? I must leave this place, for though my mother and her son know me not, their eyes seem to burn into my very soul. Well, so be it. Business shall call me to the city in the morning, and then—and then—well, let the future decide. My purpose is firm. Violet shall be my wife, and the wealth the good man left me shall protect my secret for all time. And so, good-night, ye towering hills! May the curse of a wronged man, child of a wronged race, rest upon the land that freed the slave and left him still a slave.”

Meanwhile Daisy, still piqued by Don Miguel's habit of wearing gloves at all times and places, had had a long talk with Eliza. The housekeeper was between Scylla and Charybdis. She did not want to offend her favorite mistress and still she hated to play the spy.

“Please do as I wish, Eliza,” pleaded the young girl, beautiful *en négligé*. “Mr. Forbes and I have set our hearts upon solving the mystery. I know that you share my curiosity. If you didn’t you wouldn’t be a woman. All you have to do is to wait an hour or so until you are sure that he is asleep. Then slip into his room and glance at his hands. They say that your race can see as clearly in the dark as in the daylight. I am certain that you will read his secret, for nobody could wear gloves on such a warm night as this.”

Daisy looked up at the hair-dresser with such a smiling, pleading expression in her eyes that the good-natured Eliza had no longer the heart to refuse.

“Will you always be a child, Miss Daisy?” she asked, with the affectionate freedom of a favored servant.

“Yes, Eliza, so long as you are with me. And that will be always, for when I’m married”—and the piquant little face turned red—“you are coming to live with us. Dick—

that is Mr. Forbes—and I—decided that tonight. Are you glad?”

“Indeed I am, Miss Daisy,” answered Eliza emphatically.

“And we’ll take George with us, if we can afford to have a butler. Mr. Forbes says that will depend on the market. I don’t know why it should, as meat costs just as much one year as it does another; but Dick is very clever, and I suppose he wasn’t talking nonsense.”

So the pretty maiden prattled on, anxious to retain the housekeeper until the time for solving Don Miguel’s secret should arrive.

At length a clock in the lower part of the house struck two.

“Now go, Eliza,” whispered Daisy excitedly. “Be awful quiet, and when you have looked at his hands come back and tell me what you saw.”

With slow, noiseless step the quadroon left the room. Her face wore an expression of abstraction for her thoughts were far away. She had overheard the story of her early life

as Mrs. Richards had retailed it to her guests that night, and the slave girl's mind had been pondering the possibility that her white son might be still alive. If he was, what had been his fate? Was he a gentleman—rich, cultivated, honored? Or had the taint of servile blood in his veins dragged him down to her own level? Strange questions for a mother, were they not?

The house was as silent as the grave. With something catlike in her movements she approached the front guest-chamber. Softly opening the door with her pass-key she heard the deep, regular breathing of Don Miguel. The dim light of the stars shone through the open windows upon the sleeper's bed. Why did her heart beat so wildly? Was it a mother's instinct that caused the strange agitation that beset her?

Hurry, Eliza! Only a glance and your task is done. See, his well-shaped hands lie ungloved upon the coverlid. Is he not handsome? Look at his strong, firm neck as it meets his chest. The lines are worthy a

sculptor's art. See, how clean-cut is his brow. But, hold! Why do you start back in dismay? Why do your eyes gleam so wildly as you stare at that birthmark far down upon his neck? Do you know its outlines? Did your dusky arms once twine about a man who bore that same hereditary seal? If so, the mystery of his gloves is solved. His fingertips tell that his mother was a slave.

Dazed, hardly conscious what had happened, Eliza stole from the room, and perfunctorily shut the door and locked it. The sleeper had not stirred since her entrance.

Leaning against the door for a moment she tried to think. Then this courtly Spaniard, this honored guest of her employers was her own son! What should she do? First of all she must go to Daisy and tell her—what? Why, tell her, of course, that the Spaniard wore his gloves at night. Surely a mother must not betray a son!

She crept toward the young girl's room, trembling with conflicting emotions. She had reached the darkest shadow in the hall-

way when Daisy's door opened and a white-robed figure passed out and disappeared. "It must have been Miss Violet," said Eliza to herself.

She found Daisy erect in bed, her eyes ablaze with excitement.

"What did you discover?" she asked eagerly.

"Nothing," returned Eliza in a hoarse voice. "He still had on his gloves."

"Did he?" asked Daisy, as though the subject had lost its interest in comparison with a matter of greater moment. "Well, come here, Eliza. I've got a great secret for you, though you have none for me. Vi was just in here and—what do you think? You'll never guess. She is engaged to Don Miguel. He proposed to-night and she accepted him. Isn't it the greatest lark you ever heard of?"

The quadron sank down upon a chair, physically overcome by the crisis thrust upon her. She did not heed the chatter of the excited girl before her. Her mind could entertain but one thought. She *must* prevent this

union. When she had discovered that her son was a guest of the house she had seen no reason to expose him. Her employers entertained many fleeting friends and doubtless Don Miguel's stay would be short. But to find him the accepted lover of Miss Richards placed another and more tragic phase upon the matter. Remember that for years this woman had been the recipient of kindness and consideration from the family. She had learned to love them, and her early habits as a slave had made her intensely loyal to those under whom she served. Then again, she had no especial affection for this new-found son. Even in the old days she had not held him near her heart, for his father had treated her with cruelty. The sight of that queer-shaped birthmark had reawakened her hatred for a man whose bones lay crumbling beneath a Southern battle-ground. At length she came to a decision :

“Please excuse me now, Miss Daisy,” she said as she arose. “It is almost daylight and I am very tired.”

“Forgive me, Eliza; I have been selfish. Go to your room at once. But, just one minute! Would you marry a man who always wore gloves? I’m sure I wouldn’t. Good-night. What a queer world this is!”

“It is, indeed,” muttered the quadroon, as she made her way down the hall toward Don Miguel’s door. She no longer trembled. She walked noiselessly, but her step was firm and in her face were pictured the gray tints of an unshakable resolve.

As she entered the room the faint light of early dawn showed her that her son had stirred. One arm was above his head and his face was turned toward her. She remembered that this was his favorite posture as a child, and for a moment a wave of tenderness swept over her, leaving, as it receded, a salty moisture about her eyes. The slight noise she made as she approached him caused him to move again, and as he turned she saw once more the birthmark bequeathed to the sleeper by the man who had wronged her.

“Awake, my son,” she exclaimed, touching

him upon the shoulder. He started up in dismay.

“Behold—your mother!”

A groan of despair echoed through the room.

“You are—I know it,” he returned, off his guard from the suddenness of the attack amid the fog of retreating sleep.

“What do you mean?” he asked, as his mind cleared.

“You know well that what I say is true,” she answered. “Now, my time here is short, for the servants will soon be astir. You must leave this house at once. You are my son, but I love the woman you would wrong, and, by the hatred that I bear your father’s memory, I swear that unless you renounce all claims to her hand and go hence instantly I shall arouse the house and denounce you.”

There was a savage gleam in the woman’s eyes that told her son there was no appeal for him. He gazed at her wildly for an instant. His hands twitched nervously. The awful injustice of fate drove him mad. It was bad

enough to suffer for his birth, but to have his doom pronounced by his mother was frightful. Cowering down into the pillows, he buried his face in his arms and murmured in a stifled voice :

“Go ! I will do as you wish.”

The door closed softly. A woman who shook from the reaction of her passions stood listening in a hallway through which the light of returning day was driving back the shadows.

A pistol shot rang out and awoke the sleeping household. A bullet had done its fatal work. It had killed a gentleman, the son of a slave—and had broken a woman’s heart.

## INSOMNIA MUNDI.

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A MIDDLE-AGED, well-preserved man came down the stoop of his Fifth Avenue house one morning in early fall. As he reached the sidewalk he met a neighbor, a man about his own age.

“How are you to-day?” he asked.

“Rather tired. For some inexplicable reason I could not sleep last night. I was astonished. I am seldom troubled in that way.”

“Strange! I had the same difficulty. I found I could not sleep, so I went to my library. The night was cool enough. I cannot explain my restlessness.”

They had been sauntering down the avenue. At Forty-second Street, as they turned toward the elevated road, they were joined by a mutual friend.

“Good-morning,” he remarked; “I’m glad to see you, for I want your advice. What is a good cure for insomnia?”

“Sleep,” answered one of the afflicted, smiling at his companion.

So all day long, in all parts of the city, men, whenever they met, went through much the same formula as that briefly outlined above. Late in the afternoon an enterprising newspaper published a sensational report to the effect that an epidemic of insomnia—a thing hitherto unknown—had broken out in the metropolis. Little excitement was caused by this statement until an edition issued at nine o’clock stated that the people of Philadelphia complained of sleeplessness. This startling announcement filled men with dismay. The chill of dread expectancy, a weird foreboding, cast a gloom over the night’s diversions. In clubs and theaters men wore haggard, anxious looks, and in the slums those who plotted crime ceased their occupation for a time and gossiped of the strange distemper that had fallen on the earth.

At three o'clock in the morning the streets of the city presented an unwonted appearance. Men, women, and children crowded the thoroughfares, and a wild excitement was depicted on every countenance. Earlier in the night the doctors had been busy prescribing narcotics to patients who had not slept for forty-eight long hours. Before midnight the drug stores had exhausted their stock of opiates. Still no one slept. Even the drowsy watchman failed to catch his forty winks. Desperate men drank strong liquor, but grew mad, not dull. Street fights were frequent, and the overworked police found before them a hopeless task. There was that in the air that made men defy the law and crave the wild joy of anarchy.

Every hour the newspapers published "extras." As time passed on it became evident that the whole country was afflicted with insomnia. A bulletin issued at four o'clock contained a dispatch from Chicago saying that no one had slept in that city for two nights.

“I didn’t know they ever slept out there,” remarked a New Yorker, who had been disappointed when the World’s Fair went West. Even in their misery the onlookers laughed at this.

As day broke sullenly, the crowds in the streets began to decrease in size.

“We can eat yet,” said one man to his wife, as he led her homeward. “Give me a good breakfast, dear, for to-day I’ll need all my strength.”

He spoke the truth. The night had been weird enough, but the day revealed a state of things that tried the nerves of the most phlegmatic. There was crape on many a door-knob, for little babies, sleepless for many hours, had sunk into eternal rest. Here and there, it was said, suicide had done its fatal work among high-strung, nervous victims. Everybody looked pale and worn. The streets presented many sad sights. Here in a doorway lay a newsboy, his head pillowed on his “extras,” his body quiet, but his feverish, wide-open eyes telling the story of the

world's affliction. There two men, insane from drink, were fighting over an empty flask.

Meanwhile the health authorities were gathered in solemn session. Science was dumb before these strange phenomena that demanded instant action. What was the cause of this widespread sleeplessness? "Microbes," suggested a physician, who claimed to have discovered the bacillus of epic poetry. "The excessive use of electricity in the large cities," said some one else. "The tail of a comet," remarked an old-fashioned thinker.

Thus these great men went on, each one advancing a pet theory and defending it with warmth. Perhaps, had they not been worn out from lack of sleep, they might have reached the same crisis that overtook that famous society that Bret Harte tells about, where

Abner Dean of Angels raised a point of  
order, when

A piece of old red sand-stone struck him in  
the abdomen,

At all events the day was passed in useless discussion by those responsible for the health of the community. They at length issued a bulletin calling upon all good citizens to remain quietly at home and take all hygienic precautions possible.

Down town no business was transacted. Men roamed about hopelessly, haggard, restless, sometimes loquacious, more often morose, waiting with dread for the coming of night.

By afternoon it was known of a certainty that Europe as well as America had succumbed to this mysterious foe to sleep.

“It must be awful in Norway and Sweden where the nights are so long,” remarked a wag who had evidently heard of Sydney Smith’s giraffe with the sore throat.

Never before had the newspapers had so much material with which to make sensations, but after a few days only one journal in the city was able to get out an edition. This was owing to the fact that its editors and compositors were comparatively old men. It was an interesting fact in connection with

the great "Insomnia Epidemic" that the young and the middle-aged went to pieces before the aged.

The death rate increased rapidly. After a week of sleeplessness the condition of the community was frightful. Insanity and suicide were rampant. Men preferred the long slumber of the grave to a life without rest.

The railroads stopped running. Mobs of maddened men pulled sleeping cars to pieces because the legends thereon seemed to mock them. Telegraphic communication began to be interrupted, and, after a time, ceased altogether. New York was cut off from the world and awaited the end of all things. For men had come to the conviction that this fatal epidemic presaged the destruction of the earth.

Meanwhile all the energies of modern ingenuity had been employed to overcome the deadly influence that so strangely kept them awake. The "quack" and the regular were equally unsuccessful. At first a few daring money grabbers were bold enough to peddle a "Sure Cure for Insomnia" through the

streets, but after a number of them had been killed by the enraged mobs this misleading traffic ceased.

Ten days went slowly by. No pen can picture the terrible condition that prevailed. War, with all its horrors, is as nothing compared with a world deserted by the goddess who knits up the raveled sleeve of care. Men and women ate, drank, and smoked, both day and night, in the effort to keep up their strength and quiet their throbbing nerves. The doctors, overworked, had given up the fight and acknowledged that they knew neither the cause nor the cure of the universal malady.

The city was hopeless, when one morning, while gaunt, ghastly men stood in groups upon the corners of the streets and talked in whispers of their awful doom, there came a rumor, whence no one knew, that a man had been found asleep in Park Row. Slowly creeping down town the emaciated throngs sought to verify the news. Soon City Hall Square was filled with a surging mob, wild to

discover one ray of hope in the blackness of overhanging fate. There was a moment of intense silence. Then a buzz, as though men whispered to each other, arose on the sullen air. In another instant a wild shout of joy rang out from that surging mass and then died away, as if ten thousand souls had been granted a reprieve from death and were silent from gratitude.

“A man is sleeping over there,” said the crowd to one another, pointing toward Park Row. “The doctor says his slumber is absolutely normal. He has in his hands a copy of *London Punch*.”

Then followed a strange scene. All the printing presses in the neighborhood were set at work; before many hours had passed thousands of copies of that soporific *Punch* were distributed among the tortured citizens who waited patiently below. All night long the presses kept turning out the great narcotic, and all night long a seething mass of saved insomniacs gathered up and spread abroad the welcome life-preserver.

And sleep came again to a community grown desperate. Men waited not to reach their homes but sought the light of street lamps, read a few pages of *Punch*, and then lay down upon the sidewalk and slumbered quietly for many hours. The "insomnia epidemic" had found its antidote.

## THE CZAR'S LIVER.

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“THE American eagle is a great bird,” remarked one of our countrymen who had just returned from Europe. He was smoking an after-dinner cigar with a friend who had never crossed the big pond.

“As a loyal citizen I agree with you, of course,” returned his guest; “but how was your proposition established on the other side?”

“Well, you see I spent a few weeks in St. Petersburg, and there I heard a curious story about the czar that tickled my patriotic pride.”

“Yes? What was it?”

“Perhaps you are not aware that the autocrat of all the Russias is a hard drinker. He is a man of robust mold, full-blooded, sensual, and rather inclined to intemperance

in both food and drink. For years he has been in the habit of dining à la stag. Surrounded by his intimate friends, officers in the Russian army, he spends his evenings in getting fuddled. It takes a great deal of champagne—his favorite tippie—to make any impression on his phlegmatic temperament. The Romanoffs are both tankified and cantankerous. Well, as I was saying, he has been a wine-bibber most of his life, and, until recently, felt no evil effects from his persistent potations. About a year ago, however, he began to suffer from indigestion. With truly regal unconcern he paid no attention to his ‘symptoms,’ and continued to indulge in his nightly debauchery. Finally, however, he was obliged to consult his court physician, who told him that he must give up champagne—that his royal liver was affected.

“‘By the blood of all the Slavs, I’ll not forego my fizz,’ cried his autocratic nibs, and for six weeks he continued to drink four quarts of champagne every twenty-four hours.

“The result can be imagined. The czar grew testy and unsociable. He even threatened to march at once against Constantinople, and frightened his comrades by his bilious badinage. He would satirize the highest ambitions of his best friend and threaten his most loyal supporter with exile to Siberia.

“This condition of affairs lasted for some time, until the head that wears a crown began to grasp the idea that he had better listen to his doctor. He sent again for the court practitioner and confessed that he had been drinking champagne in defiance of his liver and his health.

“‘Let me give you a prescription,’ remarked the man of drugs, with an air of wisdom that filled the czar with joy. ‘You must give up absolutely the use of cigarettes and champagne, take your medicine at the right time, and conform in all ways to the rules laid down.’

“‘I will do as you direct,’ answered the czar humbly, placing his hand upon his liver and bowing with stately pride.

“Perhaps he intended at the moment to fulfill his promise to the Russian scientist. Perhaps for a time he was startled by the fear that fizz might be more fatal than dynamite. Perhaps he thought of his family and his subjects and resolved to lead a new life and look out for his liver. Let us give him the benefit of these suppositions. But the unpleasant fact remains that he soon fell from the high rank of a sober man, and ten days later found himself unable to resist the siren sound of a popping cork. *Sic semper tyrannis.*

“After a while all Europe was cognizant of the fact that the czar had liver complaint. From Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and even London experts in liver diseases flocked to St. Petersburg. The czar began to dread a doctor more than he did a nihilist. He, however, subjected himself to all kinds of poisons and potions, but in the sacred recesses of his inner chamber continued to drink champagne. Thus it happened that whatever was gained by treatment was lost by secret dissipation.

“Finally the czar became so yellow and emaciated that he hardly dared to appear in public. He could not sleep. The gases in his stomach gave him such pain that he became convinced that he had heart disease. At this crisis somebody informed the autocrat that there were esoteric Buddhists who could relieve his agony. He at once sent to India for the most accomplished manipulators of drugs in that strange land. The rewards he held out were so great that a hundred turbaned, long-bearded men appeared at St. Petersburg, anxious to examine the czar and gain an opportunity to allay the congestion of his champagne agitated organ. One by one they were received at the palace, and one by one they went away in despair. The czar's condition was so bad that they did not dare to guarantee his recovery.

“Such was the state of affairs when a young American, who had studied his profession at a German university, and had practiced in New York, appeared on the scene. He heard the gossip that was flying around and imme-

diately sent his card to the czar. He had made a speciality of liver troubles. When he was admitted to the royal presence his independent bearing at once won the good-will of the autocrat.

“‘Your trouble is not due to what you drink, but to what you eat,’ remarked our countryman earnestly. ‘I will permit you to indulge in as much champagne as you wish, if you give me the right to regulate what you eat.’

“The czar was overjoyed. He saw at once that the young man was in full command of his *metier*.

“‘I will do as you direct,’ said the czar humbly. ‘So long as you let me indulge in fizz, I agree to conform in all other respects to your regimen.’

“My story is now at an end. Our young countryman made a wonderful cure. He cut off the czar’s beef and made him eat oatmeal. He gave him chicken for dinner and all the wine that he could drink. The result was that the autocrat began to regain his color and

the pains around his heart disappeared. He gave the American a check for one hundred thousand dollars and offered him a place at court. When the latter was refused he conferred upon him the Order of the Sacred Star."

"And where is the young doctor now?" asked the guest.

"He's dead. He died of over-indulgence in champagne."

## A COUNTRY DOCTOR.

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ONE star differs from another in glory. There is high authority for this assertion, but its evident truth is of no special significance to a sick man. Perhaps even to a man in perfect health it is not of striking importance. But to the observant mind it is interesting to note that the country doctor differs greatly from his professional brother of the city. I was struck by this fact a few days ago during a sojourn in the hill country of Connecticut. While there I passed a day with a leading physician of the township. He leads a queer life.

“A city doctor knows nothing of the difficulties we encounter,” remarked my friend as we drove toward the well-tilled fields lying beyond the village. It was early morning, and the air was as fresh as a young man just

out of college. The doctor had been up for two hours, placing the affairs of his office on a solid basis. "You see," he continued, "it is not so bad in summer, but when the snow comes I lead a terrible life. I freeze my nose and ears, I am overthrown by drifts, at night I suffer from cold, and at midday the sunlight on the snow hurts my eyes. Nevertheless, I am happy."

He whistled a merry tune, touched his mare with the whip, and in a few minutes drew up at a farmhouse whose white walls and green blinds were painfully inartistic.

He was gone fifteen minutes, a doleful quarter of an hour for me. A cow munched grass in the front yard, and an old oaken bucket was the only "citified" thing in sight. By that strange law of action and reaction, it took me back to that awful night when I saw "The Old Homestead" at the Fourteenth Street Theater.

When the doctor had replaced his drug store underneath the seat and had gathered up the reins, I asked :

“What kind of a case did you strike there?”

“Nothing serious,” he answered. “A young woman of seventy is suffering from facial neuralgia. She has youth and energy in her favor, however, and will be all right in a day or two.”

I looked at him in surprise. Had his lonely life affected his brain?

“One trouble I have,” he went on, “lies in the fact that I cannot obtain any assistance in critical cases. When one of your New York physicians desires advice from a colleague all he has to do is to send a message down the block somewhere. There are times when I would give half my income for another doctor’s aid, but I can’t get it. I have to follow the bird that flocked by itself, and do my own consulting. I must stop here a moment. I’ll be out again in five minutes.”

I don’t believe a rural physician has any idea of time. It may be that he has the ability to count a pulse, but his interpretation of what is comprised in the expression

“five minutes” is peculiar. I held that mare for fully half an hour. The flies bothered her and she grew restless. There was no relief for me but to gaze at the undulating landscape and indulge in day-dreams. “A pleasing land of drowsyhed it was, of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye, and of gay castles in the clouds that pass, forever flushing 'round a summer sky.” On a verdure crowned hill some miles to the northward arose a gigantic tree that seemed to rejoice in its enormous size. Perhaps beneath its branches the treacherous red-skin had closed his heavy eyes. Perhaps it will look down upon the valley when Chicago has grown modest and Patagonia has been admitted into the Union.

Such feverish fancies filled my mind until the doctor's return.

“What's the matter inside?” I asked.

“Oh, nothing to worry about. The sick man is about ninety-eight years old and over-worked himself yesterday in the hay field. He'll come out all right. I've prescribed a

day's rest and a calomel pill. Why, do you know, that man in spite of his age can do more on a farm in a week, than you and I could do in a month. This is a healthy country, my friend."

I began to think he was right. During the morning he made ten calls. Not one of his patients was under seventy years of age. At dinner, however, his telephone rang—for they have a few modern appliances up there, including a tank drama—and he was urged to hasten to the bedside of a sick baby. I went with him and held the mare. "There's naught so much the spirit soothes, as rum and true religion," remarked Byron, a poet once in vogue. It is evident that he had never waited for a country doctor as he tended a crying child. Such an experience is not only soothing to the spirit, it is a narcotic to the senses. When the doctor returned I was fast asleep, while the mare was in a state of semi-collapse.

"What did you do for the baby?" I asked,

“Told them to kill the cow,” he answered crossly, and I did not pursue the subject.

Later in the afternoon he was called to a patient living eight miles away. Our road led through a dense forest and the air was stifling. Before we had emerged from the woods a storm came on and the lightning flashed around us in a realistic way worthy of a well staged rendition of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” We were wetted to the skin and my companion seemed to realize that the experience was not pleasant to me, for he offered me a cigar. Amid the war of elements I grew desperate and lighted his gift. After the first puff I really hoped that I should be stricken by lightning.

The shower had cleared away as we drew up before a low-roofed, red-painted cottage surrounded by trees. A very pretty girl opened the door to the doctor and I continued my occupation of holding a mare that would not have run away under the impulsion of a dynamite bomb. My friend returned after the expiration of an exceedingly short time,

“Nobody sick in there,” he remarked; “an old woman nervous, that’s all.”

“How old?” I asked anxiously.

“One hundred and six. She’s beginning to grow somewhat supersensitive.”

On our return to the office we found several patients waiting for the dispenser of potions, pills, and powders. My doctor spent an hour or more relieving the aches and pains that had sought him out. Then we had supper. Before the meal was over the telephone rang again. The man of science serenely abandoned his cold ham and iced tea, and I could hear him say:

“Yes; give the baby two drops at eleven.”

“What’s that? I don’t hear you.”

“Yes; that’s right. Two drops at eleven.”

“Hello. No; don’t wake her up during the night. If she’s restless at sunrise rub her with oil. That’s all. Good-by.”

Before he could resume his supper a patient rang the office bell. My doctor was engaged for an hour. When he rejoined me on the piazza the mare was at the door.

“More calls?” I asked.

“Yes, of course; I always spend the evening on the road.”

We were gone until eleven o'clock. The roads we traversed, the darkness of the woods, the dreary barking of watch-dogs are to me like an unpleasant dream. We returned to the office tired and worn. The doctor looked pale, and I supposed, of course, that he would go at once to bed. What was my astonishment to see him place upon his desk a number of account-books.

“Is not your day's work done?” I asked.

He smiled hopelessly. “Just begun, my boy. If I didn't work now the results of the last twelve hours would amount to nothing in dollars and cents.”

Then he spent half an hour in making notes of his day's labor. I watched him with an emotion that was almost reverential. Here, if anywhere, was a man. Subduing all inclinations toward frivolity, or even healthy recreation, he goes on his way, day after day, applying as skillfully as he can the scientific

knowledge in his grasp. For him there is no night, no Sunday, no vacation; always fighting death, he gives up his life to the conflict. And what does he find? Testy patients, ignorant people who neglect his commands, ungrateful fools who seem to think that he is a slave to their demands, men and women who look for miracles, and do not know that even a doctor cannot always stay the hand of Terror's King.

"And now for bed!" I exclaimed, as he laid aside his books.

"Not yet. I must have my case refilled."

Out into the night again. Near at hand a light gleamed in the window of a drug store. A sleepy clerk answered our knock, and in a few moments my doctor was busy with the bottles on the shelf. He was at work for fully half an hour. In his case he carried fifty vials. Many of the drugs had been exhausted in the day's routine, and the act of replenishing took time. I yawned and fretted, but the doctor seemed to feel no fatigue. "He is made of iron," I said to myself

as he strode homeward with a firm and even tread.

I had almost fallen to sleep later on, when I heard some one descending the stairs. It was twelve o'clock.

"Where are you going?" I asked, as I recognized the doctor's portly form.

"Into the office for an hour," he remarked. "This is the only time in which I have a chance to do any scientific reading."

I went back to bed, but I could not sleep. I was wondering how much my friend made a year. At breakfast, the next morning, I said:

"Doctor, I don't want to be impertinent; but will you kindly tell me how much your practice pays you?"

He smiled quizzically as he answered:

"I earn \$2000 a year. I collect about \$900."

## A SCARED BRITON.

---

IT was the smoking compartment of a sleeper bound for St. Paul from Chicago. The tobacco victims there assembled had never met before, but their indulgence in a bad habit made between them a bond of sympathy, and after a time they grew talkative. There was in the party a young Englishman, traveling for pleasure; a drummer, selling cigars; an agent for a famous circus; a newspaper man from Boston; the Pullman conductor, and your humble servant.

The Englishman remarked, after the weather and the crops had been exhausted:

“Ah, isn't thah some danejah in traveling in this country? I've been told as 'ow a train is 'eld hup now and then by 'ighway-men.”

His peculiar manipulation of the letter

“h” convinced us at once that he was at least an English peer, and possibly related to the royal family. Perhaps he was searching for a “wealthy Hamerican gyurl.”

“You’re right,” broke in the Boston journalist. “Our train between Boston and Springfield was stopped in a deserted locality one day last week by mounted desperadoes from Worcester. Some of my fellow passengers lost their watches and our conductor lost his head.”

“My heyes!” cried the lording. “So far heast, too!”

“That’s nothing,” commented the Pullman conductor, whose thin face betrayed no appreciation of humor. “As I pulled out of St. Paul a few nights ago somebody slipped a note into my hand. It read: ‘Look out for the Harding gang. They intend to give you the razzle-dazzle to-night.’”

“What’s that?” asked the Briton.

“It’s an Indian phrase, meaning ‘a general massacre,’” explained the Bostonian.

“Bah Jove!”

“Well,” continued the conductor, “I did not pay much attention to the warning. I knew the Harding gang by reputation, but I was not afraid of them. I have run trains in Texas, and have often had my lights shot out by cow-boys. I did not, therefore, dread the semi-civilized outlaws of this part of the country. We had reached this vicinity that evening, when the train suddenly stopped. I rushed forward to see what was the matter, and was confronted by a masked robber, who told me to hold up my hands. I did as he directed. There are times when I prefer defeat to death. This was one of them. I threw up my palms toward the lamps, and the outlaw emptied my pockets. His pals, seven in number, went through the train in the good-natured way peculiar to their kind, and gathered in a vast deal of booty. Then they bid us farewell, and we moved on through the night. I have more respect for the Harding gang than I had a month ago.” The conductor tipped me a solemn wink.

The Englishman was growing very nervous.

“Perfectly awful,” he exclaimed. “Did they catch the bloomin’ crooks?”

“No. In fact, we have reason to believe that they contemplate another attack.”

Milord lighted a fresh cigar. I noticed that his hand trembled.

“How far West are you going?” somebody asked him.

“Hi’m not quite certain,” he replied. “Hi thought of seeing San Francisco.”

“You take your life in your hands, stranger,” remarked the commercial traveler, who seemed annoyed at the vile odor of the Englishman’s cigar. “There is no end to the dangers incident to travel between here and the coast.”

“It’s not so much highwaymen I fear as cyclones,” broke in the circus agent. “Why, do you know, it was only about ten miles west of here that a funnel-shaped cloud took hold of our tent, a few weeks ago, and lifted the whole concern, including the elephants

and the living skeleton, into the next county. It saved car fare, of course; but if we had struck a mountain it would have been a bad thing for the show."

"Bah Jove!" exclaimed the Briton, aghast.

"You were in great luck," remarked the conductor. "I had an experience between St. Paul and Omaha that was not so fortunate. We were booming along at the rate of forty miles an hour one morning when I noticed a storm coming on us from the south. Suddenly everything grew black as night, and I felt the train rise from the track on the wings of a relentless wind. We were carried northward about twenty miles, when the wind loosened its grip and the train sank, by a wonderful chance, upon the tracks of a parallel road. The wheels of the engine were still revolving, and we rushed on toward Omaha. We were on the wrong side of the road, however, and ran plump into an express train bound for St. Paul. Only thirty people were killed, fortunately, and I escaped without a scratch."

The Englishman had grown very pale. "Have you got anything to drink?" he asked of the porter, who had just appeared after a three hours' nap.

"This way, sah. May be able to give you a flask, sah."

When the Briton returned there was more color in his cheeks. We had been indulging in a quiet laugh at his expense, but regained our gravity at once in the hope that he would pass around the flask he had just purchased. He seated himself calmly, however, wiped his mouth with a silk handkerchief, and seemed to feel that he had been thoroughly hospitable.

"Ah, by the way," he began, "hahr these cyclones as frequent as they seem to be destructive?"

"I should say so," answered the newspaper man. "I spent a week here in Minnesota once and we had a storm every evening at ten. Let me see, it's now half after nine. I should not be surprised if we struck a cyclone within the next ten miles. I should like to have you

see one. They are one of the proudest products of our land."

"Thanks," returned milord. "I should like very much to have some acquaintance with them."

The train slowed up just here, and then came to a dead stop. The conductor had disappeared. I saw the Englishman put his hand on his watch and glance at the door in a nervous way. He had not forgotten the tales of highwaymen he had just heard. When we had resumed our journey, the commercial man remarked:

"I do so much traveling that my nerves have become dulled, but there is one form of disaster that is ever in my mind."

"What is that?" asked the Britisher apprehensively.

"I am always fearful that the train will leave the track. You see we have to depend upon the skill and care of men who do not possess a vast amount of either. For instance, the track beyond here for fifty miles has been in bad condition for a year. It is now being

repaired; but suppose that a reckless workman leaves his tools in our way, or fails to rivet his rails with requisite force, where are we? It's horrible to think of."

The Englishman turned white again, pulled out his flask, took a long drink, gazed through the window for a moment, and then muttering a hoarse "good-night," sought such repose as was available in "lower four."

I did not see the victim of my countrymen's gossip again until I reached Omaha. I was seated at the breakfast table one morning when he joined me.

"Still going westward?" I remarked.

"Yes—I suppose so."

He had in his hand a morning newspaper. As he glanced over the telegraphic columns his face grew pale. I looked at my journal and saw the following headlines:

"Cyclone in Wilkesbarre, Pa."

"A Passenger Train held up on the Missouri Pacific."

"Terrible Accident Due to a Broken Rail on the Old Colony Road."

The Englishman had started for the door.

“Where are you going?” I cried.

“To England, damn you,” was his discourteous answer.

## A TALE FROM CAIRO.

---

ONE afternoon last winter a young New Yorker and an English lordling sat on the piazza of the New Hotel, Cairo, Egypt. It was a glorious day, and the garden that stretched before them was an Oriental dream.

“I had a stunning adventure yesterday,” Lord Branford was saying. “You see, I was out for a ride, and about a mile from here I heard behind me the clatter of hoofs. I turned in my saddle and saw that the black rascal who was driving a pair of clean-cut white horses had lost his grip on them. In the carriage was a beautiful woman who, in her excitement, had thrown up her veil. She was in imminent danger for a moment; but as the runaways dashed past me I put spurs to my horse, and in another instant had

grasped one of the white plungers by the head. I was nearly thrown to the ground, but the coachman managed to get hold of the reins again, and the peril to us all was soon past. As I turned to ride off, the woman, still unveiled, gave me a charming smile. I raised my hat, cried 'Allah be praised,' in a most devout way, and left her to the care of her reckless driver. I must acknowledge, old man, that I have been in love just twenty-four hours."

Machmoud Bey, a wealthy young Egyptian, who had been educated in Paris, and was one of the best-known men in Cairo, had overheard a portion of the Englishman's anecdote.

"You are very unlucky, my lord," he remarked, seating himself. "You have gazed upon the face of Said Pasha's favorite. No man is ever happy again after seeing the light of our old friend's harem."

"Poor fellow; I'm sorry for you," said Dick Dalton, the American, turning a sympathetic face toward Lord Branford. "But, as

one of my historic countrymen remarked, what are you going to do about it?"

"Nothing, I suppose, but go to the grave with a broken heart."

"Perhaps I can help you out," suggested Machmoud insinuatingly. "I am on good terms with the Pasha, and can get speech with the chief of his eunuchs. Perhaps a bribe, American in size, might enable you to have a few words with your inamorata in the garden of the harem."

Lord Branford brightened. "Do you think so? I'd give a thousand pounds to have a chance to thank her for that smile."

"Too much money," commented Machmoud. "Half the amount will do."

"You'll stick by me, Dalton?" asked Lord Branford.

The young American hesitated. He was in love with Lady Gwendolen, Branford's sister, and he knew that he had a rival in Machmoud Bey. He feared that the crafty Egyptian was attempting to play a sharp game. However, he did not wish to appear

a coward before an Englishman, so he answered :

“Of course I will; singing merrily, ‘Over the Garden Wall,’ we’ll beard the Pasha in his den.”

Machmoud smiled courteously, and his white teeth glistened in contrast with his dark skin.

“Meet me here to-night at nine. You’ll have no climbing to do. The eunuch will admit you through the gate. I must hurry off now. I have much to do.”

Lord Branford handed the Egyptian five one-hundred-pound notes.

“You are sure that is enough?” he asked.

“Of course it is. But you must be very much in love.”

With that Machmoud took his departure.

“Getting into a harem in Cairo is like getting into office in America,” remarked Dalton. “The campaign expenses are heavy.”

It was a beautiful night; a night such as one finds only in Egypt. Beneath such skies the triumphs of Cleopatra were not difficult.

She could never have held Marc Antony had she been surrounded by a London fog or a Boston drizzle. Great romances need a romantic background.

Some such thought as this was in the mind of Lord Branford, as, accompanied by Machmoud Bey and Dick Dalton, he left a modern hotel on a mediæval errand. He was not the type of English aristocrat that playwrights place upon the stage. He was a tall, dark, handsome man, with a Byronic face and a deep, melodious voice. He was just the kind of a hero to make love gracefully in a moonlit garden of the Orient. He seemed to realize this, for he hummed a song of passion as he strode onward.

"Keep quiet, Don Juan," whispered Dalton, as they approached the Pasha's palace. "You'll rouse the dog." Dalton had lived in New England.

Machmoud Bey, who had seemed to grow more and more nervous as they went forward, seized his companions by the arms and drew them toward a high wall that sur-

rounded the garden. The moon cast long shadows across the ground and the palm trees waved in the night wind.

“Wait here a moment,” whispered Machmoud. “I’ll go and give the signal.” He left them and approached the gateway.

“Do you thoroughly trust that fellow?” asked Dalton of his companion, in a low tone.

“Of course I don’t. I’m an Englishman.” There was a good deal of condensed history in his answer.

Machmoud soon rejoined them.

“Come,” he said.

“Are you armed?” asked Dalton, beneath his breath, and with his mouth close to Branford’s ear.

“Of course not. If we were caught in there with weapons it would go hard with us.”

In another instant they had passed through the gate, where a black-faced, villainous-looking eunuch had bowed low to them, and

smiled as though in gratitude. Five hundred pounds is a large sum of money, even to the manager of a harem.

The garden in which Lord Branford and his companions found themselves was small, but of wonderful beauty. Tropical plants, flowing fountains, and picturesque rocks rendered it a miniature paradise. The three men stood silent for a moment, enjoying the beauties of the scene before them. Then the Englishman whispered to Machmoud :

“Where is Favorita ?”

“There she stands,” answered the Egyptian, pointing to a figure in white, partially concealed in the shadow of a huge marble vase. Branford rushed forward eagerly, and Dalton followed him. In an instant there arose a sharp cry of amazement from the Englishman, followed by something that sounded like an oath. The white-robed figure had stepped forward into the moonlight, and, behold, there was the squat form and evil face of Said Pasha.

“By the beard of the prophet !” he cried,

“you young men are rash. Do you know that your lives are in my power?”

A crowd of eunuchs, fully armed, had gathered around the central group.

“What does this mean, Machmoud?” asked the Pasha sternly.

“It means,” answered the treacherous Egyptian, “that this young American is in love with one of your women.”

“That’s a lie,” cried Dalton; but he went no further, for Branford’s hand was on his mouth. “Keep quiet. The Pasha has the right to do with us as he pleases,” he whispered.

“Perhaps so,” returned Machmoud gently. “My friend Said can determine that for himself.”

“Speak, my lord,” said the Pasha, turning toward the real offender. “I always believe an Englishman.”

This seemed as hard a hit at Machmoud as at Dalton.

“The fact is,” began Branford slowly, “that there is no woman in the case at all.

My friend and I were anxious to see your famous garden before leaving Cairo. Perhaps we were indiscreet, but we really meant no discourtesy toward you, Said Pasha."

"Great Scott. You're worse than an Egyptian, Branford," muttered Dalton.

Meanwhile Machmoud and the Pasha were conversing in low tones.

"You have a sister, Lord Branford. My friend Machmoud here loves her," said the Pasha at length. "You, of course, realize that I have the legal right to put you and your friend to death. You remember the fate of some of your countrymen who have dared to invade harems. Now, no one knows of your presence here save Machmoud. If I have you both beheaded, nobody will ever find out what becomes of you. My ultimatum is this: If you will sign a paper agreeing to confer your sister on Machmoud, we will let you go. Otherwise, we shall be obliged to cut your throats. I will give you ten minutes in which to come to a decision. Machmoud Bey and myself

realize that when an Englishman signs his name to a document he never goes back on the promise he has made. You and the American may confer in private, if you wish."

In another moment Branford and Dalton were seemingly left alone. But they knew that any attempt to escape would be useless.

"What shall we do?" asked Dalton desperately. "I wish I had that Machmoud by the throat."

"Don't get excited, old man. Everything will be all right. I shall sign the paper."

"No!"

"Yes, of course I will."

"Ho, there, Said Pasha. Come back. We have reached a verdict."

On the instant the moonlit garden was alive with dusky forms.

"What is your choice?" said the pot-bellied Pasha, stroking his fierce-looking beard.

"I prefer my head to my sister," answered

Branford, with Oriental sententiousness. Dalton groaned aloud.

“Bring writing materials,” ordered the Pasha hoarsely. “Quick, there! These Englishmen are very fickle.”

A strange scene was then enacted. The romantic looking Englishman seated himself at a table, brought forward by slaves, and attached his name to the document drawn up by Machmoud Bey. Dalton stood looking on in despair, while the Pasha, a grotesque figure in the half light, laughed noiselessly. The stoical eunuchs gazed at the little group indifferently. Perhaps in their phlegmatic hearts they were sorry that they were not to take part in a bloody tragedy.

When the paper had been duly signed, and unwillingly witnessed by Dick Dalton, the prisoners were conducted to the gate and released.

“Now you may sing ‘Over the Garden Wall,’ if you wish, Mr. Dalton,” cried Machmoud Bey triumphantly.

“Curse you,” returned the American.

Three hours later Lord Branford, Dick Dalton, Lady Gwendolen, and her chaperone were booming along toward Alexandria on a special train, hired for the occasion.

“But does not your conscience trouble you, my lord?” asked Dalton.

“Not at all, old man. They are nothing but a pack of rascally Egyptians.”

## DURSTON'S BURGLAR.

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**M**R. RICHARD DURSTON, bachelor, had always been afraid of burglars and susceptible old maids. He could not remember the time when the dread of being robbed, or sued for a breach of promise, was not upon him. In other respects he was quite courageous. He never seemed to feel nervous about dogs, lightning, or fire. He even dared to do right, now and then. On the whole he was as plucky as the average man, in spite of his conviction that the time would come when he would have trouble with a burglar and a suit at law with an old maid. Circumstances have proved that his presentiment was based on clairvoyant power. You remember the Durston breach-of-promise case, do you not? I'll tell you the inside history of it some day. Just at present, however, I shall devote my-

self to giving you an account of Durston's adventure with a burglar. The newspapers have never done full justice to the affair.

Durston, as you know, lives in a handsome house on an uptown cross street. He has always held that the majority of burglaries are effected through the treachery of servants. He has, therefore, kept bachelor's hall for many years with the aid of only one assistant—an old woman—a kind of heirloom in his family. As he generally dines at his club, he has managed to live very comfortably, without keeping a boarding-house for men and women who might be in league with robbers. His aged housekeeper is not ambitious. He feels confident that she will never sue him for breach of promise, nor permit a burglar to make a breach in the house.

Durston's library and bedroom are on the second floor. The old woman sleeps in a back room on the floor above. She is very deaf, so when Durston wishes to call her he touches a button at the head of his bed. This sends a mild electric current through the

reclining form of the housekeeper upstairs and she rushes down to her master. She approves of this process in the belief that it tends to hold her rheumatism in check. It seems a very shocking way to treat an old woman, however. And then Durston must find it unpleasant to discharge a servant two or three times a day.

But *revenons à nos* burglar. One night last winter Durston reached home rather earlier than usual. As was his custom, he examined the doors and windows in the lower part of the house and then went to the library. He found his smoking jacket and slippers in their accustomed place. A wood fire was crackling in the grate and a decanter of whisky and a box of cigars tempted him from the center table. Durston smiled contentedly as he drew an easy chair toward the fire. Life was very pleasant to him. He was one of those happy bachelors who have no regrets. Not that Durston lacked sentiment. Far from it. In fact he was not at all what the world calls a practical man—as that breach

of promise affair abundantly proved. You remember how he—but never mind that just now.

No, Durston was inclined to look at the romantic side of life, and as he smoked a perfecto and sipped his whisky and seltzer in front of the blaze that night he indulged in imaginings that would have shocked the hard-headed housekeeper upstairs worse than did her private electric current the day the battery was overcharged.

Durston had for the moment forgotten all about old maids and burglars. He was in a condition of bodily and mental repose that drove into outer darkness all the unpleasant things of life. Finally the conviction came upon him slowly that it was time to go to bed. He fought hard against the proposition, but there was no escape for him. Looking at his watch he found that it was long after one o'clock. Turning out the lights in the library, he entered his bedroom. He was still in a state of sleepy contentment. Just as he was about to put out the gas, he was startled

by a slight noise that seemed to come from the cellar. He listened intently. Five minutes passed but there were no further sounds from below. Durston surrounded himself by perfect darkness and crawled into bed. But he could not sleep. That unlucky noise had rendered him feverish. The thought of burglars had destroyed his serenity of mind. His revolver lay on a chair by the bedside and he kept his hand on it for some time. The weapon seemed to whisper to him: "Peace, Durston; go to sleep, my child. I will not go off until the burglar comes."

This assurance on the part of the pistol quieted Durston somewhat and he was beginning to feel very sleepy again when he heard a light step on the stairs. There was no mistake about it. After keeping sullenly aloof for years, Durston's burglar had come at last. At first our bachelor felt a cold chill creeping up his spinal column. Then, as the burglar carefully stole through the hall and entered the library, Durston was astonished to realize that he was lying in bed with a pistol in his

hand, a house-breaker in the next room, and that he was beginning to enjoy the adventure. The thought flashed through his mind that even a breach of promise case might not be as horrible as he had imagined.

“The reckless fellow seems to think that there’s nobody in the house,” chuckled Durston, as he heard his visitor light a burner in the library. Then quietly getting out of bed and stepping gently to the door of his bedroom, Durston pointed the revolver at a small, dark, rather well-dressed man who stood in the center of the library, looking about him eagerly.

“Put up your hands, or I’ll send a ball through you,” cried Durston sternly.

The dapper little burglar saw at a glance that his game was up.

“Don’t do anything rash,” he remarked calmly, helping himself to a stiff dose of Durston’s whisky and then lighting one of his unwilling host’s cigars.

Durston was astonished and amused. “Now that I’ve got my burglar after waiting for him

so many years, I might as well make a little pleasure out of him," he said to himself. Then to the burglar:

"You're a cool one. I congratulate you on your nerve. You will pardon me, however, if I ask you to take the trouble to lay aside your cigar for a moment and step to the telephone."

The burglar looked sharply at Durston, who still covered him with the revolver. There was that in the bachelor's face that shook the coolness of the intruder. He walked quickly to the telephone.

"Take down that pamphlet there," continued Durston. "Now look up the call for the — Precinct Station House. Have you found it?"

"Yes."

"Ring up the Central Office."

The burglar sullenly turned the crank.

"You know what to do now. Go ahead."

A glance at the revolver was sufficient for the frightened little man. He briskly gave the required number to the operator.

“Is this the —— Precinct Station House?” he asked, after a time. “All right. Wait a moment.”

“Tell them you’re a burglar, and want a policeman sent here at once to arrest you,” commanded Durston, smiling grimly.

“Will one policeman do, they ask,” said the burglar.

“Use your own judgment in that matter,” remarked Durston politely.

“Hello, hello! Yes—one will do very nicely. Hurry him up, please. Yes. Thank you. Good-night!”

“You did very well,” commented our bachelor. “If you robbed as cleverly as you telephone you would not be where you are now. I must put you to the inconvenience of stepping into my bedroom for a moment. I want my housekeeper to see a nice little burglar who has ordered his own arrest.”

Durston, with his pistol still in hand, touched the electric button at the head of his bed. A few minutes later the housekeeper, *en négligé*, entered the library. With

a cry of despair she clasped the burglar to her bosom. "My son, my son! Why are you here?"

Durston was amazed. He had not known that his housekeeper had a history.

"Is this one of your boys?" he yelled at her.

"My only son," she sobbed. "I have not seen him for twenty years, but I recognized him at once. Is he a friend of yours, Mr. Durston?"

Our bachelor knew not what to say. His housekeeper, as I have said, was an inheritance from his parents, and he had always been fond of her. She had taken good care of him all these years, and he hated to tell her that her son was a criminal.

"Yes," he shouted. "He dropped in to have a cigar with me. I knew you would like to see him. But he is obliged to go now. He wants to catch a train for Montreal. Kiss him farewell. He won't be back for some time."

“Thank you, sir,” murmured the burglar.  
“You have a good heart.”

A few minutes later Durston stood on the front steps of his residence and watched his housekeeper's son as he hurried down the street.

“What shall I say to the policeman?” was the problem vexing him.

You remember the mysterious item that appeared in the newspapers the next morning. Durston explained his telephone message on the ground that he had been suffering from nightmare. The above is the first public statement of the facts in the case. I hope Durston won't get into a scrape by this narration. As a good citizen he had no right to let the burglar escape.

## AN ICONOCLASTIC VOICE.

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THE great trouble with John Strathmore was that every time he said a word he broke something. You who have a normal vocalization cannot imagine how serious an affliction this was. Strathmore, early in life, realized that he was not like other men, so far as his voice was concerned, and wisely refrained from making use of his conversational ability. As a child he became convinced of his inherent tendency toward an iconoclastic career, and when he smashed his first doll by saying "Gosh" he knew that his voice contained a destructive quality that did not often pertain to the human organ of sound.

As he grew older he became more and more worried about the strange tendency that resulted in so much miscellaneous havoc. He found, by repeated experiments, that he

could not make a remark, even in a whisper, without cracking a vase, a pane of glass, or a watch crystal. He tried various styles of vocalization, and pitched his voice in many different keys; the result was the same; his enunciatory organs possessed a destructive quality that defied analysis and robbed many an unsuspecting pocket.

As John grew toward manhood he became constantly more silent. Nobody, not even his parents, suspected that the broken glass-ware that had pertained to his boyhood was due to a physical defect rather than to a mischievous spirit. When a window was broken or a goblet destroyed, it was confidently assumed by the elder Strathmores that "Jack" had been up to his "old trick of throwing stones." The fact was that John Strathmore had never pegged a geologic remnant in his life, and he realized that he was fitted by nature to indulge in more destructive fun than most boys.

At the dinner table he seldom opened his lips. He feared that if he asked for the butter

something in the room would go to smash. He thus gained the reputation for moroseness, and was looked upon as an unsociable being who had a great regard for his own superiority. For John was "smart." At school his written examinations had always resulted in his honor. When, however, he was obliged to stand up and answer questions, he either remained silent or gave vent to various grunts that were not at all satisfactory to his master.

In a moment of despair he went to a physician and told the man of science about his unique affliction. The doctor, who was an expert in diagnosis, asked our hero to test his voice. The result of the experiment was that various vials belonging to the office were rendered useless.

"You have crackatory meningitis of the vocal chords," remarked the doctor wisely. The fact was that he could not find in his experience any precedent for a case of this kind. However, he wrote a prescription and asked Strathmore for ten dollars.

“This medicine will soften your enunciation,” explained the specialist. “You need a long course of anti-iconoclastic treatment.”

This was thoroughly satisfactory to the victim. He began to feel that he might yet go through life without breaking, surreptitiously, an unwonted amount of bric-a-brac. Strathmore returned to his boarding-house in high spirits. He had taken a dose of the medicine prescribed and began to think that his landlady’s dinner service was safe, even if he happened to feel loquacious. There was a new boarder present that evening. She was young and pretty and Strathmore lost his heart at once. Under the excitement of the moment he became more talkative than usual, and would have left the table in high spirits if he had not broken his finger-bowl by a sudden remark about the weather. He went to his room in a collapsed condition. He began to fear that the doctor had not done as much for his voice as he had hoped he would.

Such was the situation for some weeks.

Strathmore took his medicine at intervals, but did not dare to let his tongue wag. He was afraid that the peculiar *timbre* of his voice would smash his inamorata's eye-glasses or make a rent in her soup plate. He endured awful agony when she looked at him, and he really feared that she considered him idiotic.

Thus it was that months went by before Strathmore grew desperate enough to throw his scruples and his voice to the winds. One day he met the girl of his choice in the hallway. Nobody was at hand and our hero could not resist the temptation before him. He placed his arm around her waist, and, bending down, whispered: "I love you, my darling."

He was soon convinced that his voice was up to its old tricks. His words had broken the girl all up.

## THREE STRANGE SUICIDES.

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When all the blandishments of life are gone,  
The coward sneaks to death, the brave live on.

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IT is a well-established fact that mid-summer is pre-eminently the season of suicides. Statistics carefully gathered in this country and Europe prove this, and a glance at the newspapers serves to convince the reader that in this case figures do not lie. It is really astonishing how much miscellaneous self-destruction is now going on. Even the old Romans, in the days when the empire had begun to collapse, were not more suicidal, as a community, than the Americans of this generation. This is a harsh statement, but, unfortunately, it is not an exaggeration. Too many of our countrymen do not consider

suicide a killing matter. They take their lives with a pagan nonchalance that may be classic but is not inspiring. A man who will kill himself on a hot day because his collar irritates his neck is not heroic. He should take off his collar, not cut his throat.

These reflections were called forth by three tragic tales that have come to my knowledge within the last few days. The first relates to a sensitive, brilliant, rather flighty young man, whose fate carries with it a warning. I know there is nothing you like better than a story with a moral. The youth in question earned a fair salary as a bank clerk in this city. For some years it had been his custom to go to a race track once every summer. For weeks before his annual indulgence in this dissipation he would hoard his money until a sufficient sum had been saved to insure him a day's pleasure without prejudice to his landlady. He was scrupulously honest and never ran into debt.

As he was starting for Sheepshead Bay a

week or more ago, an acquaintance, a fellow-clerk, handed him twenty dollars.

“Put this on Tony in the fourth race for me, old man. The odds are long and I have a good tip on the horse. He’s a sure winner.”

Our hero promised to fulfill the commission but smiled mockingly at his colleague. He never took “long shots” himself. At the track he was very successful. After the third race had been run he found himself one hundred dollars ahead. He hurried to the betting ring and plunged heavily on the favorite for the next contest. He forgot all about his friend’s request. When, however, Tony came down the stretch an easy winner, the wretched youth recalled the promise he had made. The twenty dollars he had placed in a pocket by itself and he now found himself in a terrible predicament. The odds had been thirty to one against Tony. He owed his friend six hundred dollars. He had no way of paying the debt. If he returned to the city with the announce-

ment that he had forgotten to make the bet he would be always under suspicion.

A haggard, hopeless man passed through the gates and boarded a train for Brooklyn. On reaching that city he entered a drug store, wrote a note to his friend inclosing the twenty dollars, and then hastened toward the East River docks. His body was fished out of the water the next day. One of the saddest features of his fatal folly lies in the fact that Tony had never won a race before, and probably never will again.

The suicide of Mrs. Marston, relict of the late John T. Marston, was also due to a lack of money. It was not, however, the outcome of a sudden impulse. For five years she had calmly contemplated the step she took last week. You remember Marston. He had been a successful merchant, and it was generally believed that he had saved a million. He had lived luxuriously, and his wife had had her every wish gratified. When Marston died, however, it was found that his wealth was mythical. After his debts were

paid there was nothing left for his wife but his life insurance, a paltry ten thousand dollars. Mrs. Marston, who was a good deal of a philosopher, argued that the interest on this sum would be woefully insufficient for her rather extravagant needs. She was a clever woman, and might have done something to support herself, but she had lived so long an existence of leisure that the idea of work was extremely distasteful to her. She might have married again, perhaps, had it not been for her distrust of men. The fact that her husband had not been the millionaire she thought him had made her cynical.

After going over the ground very carefully for some weeks Mrs. Marston reached this decision: She possessed \$10,000; she would divide it into five equal parts, thus obtaining \$2000 a year for one luxurious lustrum, and when she had spent the entire amount she would abandon life by the pleasantest method known to science.

She carried out this programme to the letter. She lived well on \$2000 a year, and no-

body suspected that she had selected the date of her death. She was looked upon by her friends as a cheerful, witty, intellectual woman, who enjoyed life in a reasonable way. For a year previous to her suicide she had made a close study of toxicology. She became wonderfully well-informed in this branch of science, and I really believe she could have poisoned her acquaintances with the skill of a Borgia. She refrained, however, from trying her 'prentice hand on those about her, and waited for a victim until she had drawn the last dollar of her husband's insurance money from the bank. Then she calmly took a dose of prussic acid and flitted away to that land where an annual income of some size is not essential to happiness.

But the most remarkable suicide of the year was that of Algernon T. Snooks. It is not generally known that he forced himself out of this queer world, but the truth is that he died of arsenic, administered by his own famous hand. I say "famous hand," because it penned that immortal lyric, "The Battle of

the Dwarfs." If it had never written poetry it would never have handled poison.

You are astonished at this assertion. You have looked upon Snooks as a great genius, and have admired the only poem he ever wrote. You have wondered why he never followed up his first success, and why he made no defense against the charge of plagiarism brought against the second poem bearing his name. A tragedy lies behind all this. I will tell you what I know of it.

Snooks, as you remember, was a commonplace little man who had made a fortune in groceries. He had begun life as an errand boy in the store where his financial success was won, and his active, exacting existence had given him no opportunity for cultivating his mind. He had read a few books and had seen perhaps a dozen good plays, but he knew much more about sugar than about Socrates, and a barrel of flour was more significant to him than a flower of rhetoric.

Nevertheless, when Snooks was forty years old he wrote a great poem. He never knew

just how he did it. He was sitting at his desk in the store about midnight, not many months ago, casting up accounts. Suddenly his pen, deserting the bookkeeper's figures, began to write figures of speech. Snooks was astonished, but boldly abandoned himself to the strange impulse besetting him. After a weird hour had passed, he had produced a poetic gem entitled "The Battle of the Dwarfs." Whether he had been hypnotized or had been inspired by the wandering spirit of some bard, he never knew. With the prudence of a business man he signed his name to his first literary output and locked the poem in his desk. The next day he sent it to a magazine. You remember the sensation it created. It was copied all over this country and England, was translated into French, German, and Italian, and made the name of Algernon T. Snooks known in every literary center of the civilized world. "The Learned Blacksmith" was never so widely recognized as the "Grocer Poet."

Snooks should have been happy, you

think. Well, he wasn't. You see the responsibilities of his exalted position in the literary world weighed upon him with a pressure that turned his hair white. He was constantly in receipt of letters from prominent publishers asking for some of his poems. He tried to write verse again, but—perhaps because he was a successful grocer—he could not get the measure right. He bought a "Complete Rhymester" and studied trochees, dactyls, and spondees until his brain whirled. His efforts were all in vain. The divine afflatus that had struck him that fatal midnight never again inspired his lagging pen.

As time went on his difficulties increased. He was elected a member of several literary clubs and was asked by certain provincial societies to deliver lectures on the future of American poetry. He neglected his business in order to study letters and allowed his white hair to flow long behind. Finally, the pressure upon him became so great that he found it absolutely essential to his reputation to publish another poem. For six weeks he

tried to produce something approximately worthy of his first effort. Then, in despair, he decided to steal from some neglected genius a poem, forceful, but forgotten.

You know the result. Snooks was convicted of plagiarism one week and his death was announced the next. Like the poor little frog in the fable, he exploded in the effort to become as big as an ox. In these days of hypnotism, spiritualism, and other queer influences, it is well to bear in mind the fate of Algernon T. Snooks and not overestimate one's individual resources.

## A MISUNDERSTOOD WOMAN.

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THE separation of Eugene Mortimer and his wife was a surprise to their friends. I am the only person in the city who knows the cause of their domestic tragedy, and the time has come to let the public hear the story—for it embodies a valuable lesson. You have seen Mortimer, of course. He is one of the most prominent of our younger lawyers, and has taken quite an active part in politics. He is a tall, thin, nervous man, who is always rubbing his hands across his face—like a clock. His mentality is more brilliant than well-balanced. In fact, he has never thoroughly repaired the intellectual ravages of a college education.

Mrs. Mortimer is not a genius. She loves Mortimer, and, up to a short time ago, had

made him a good wife. She acted as a kind of sedative upon him, and he was generally happy in her company. By an unfortunate chance she read a book in which the author depicted the awful results which follow intellectual divergences between husband and wife. He argued that a woman should make an effort to keep up with the mental progress of her husband. If she did not, when he was forty and she was thirty-five he would be sure to be bored by her lack of sympathy with his ambitions and achievements. Mrs. Mortimer was scared. She wished to retain Eugene's love to the end of life, and determined to keep up to his intellectual plane if possible. She began her studies by reading the debates on the McKinley tariff bill. Mortimer, she knew, was intensely interested in political economy.

At dinner one night, recently, she observed that he looked tired. She determined to surprise and interest him at the same time.

"Do you think the existing duty on sugar should be reduced, my dear?" she asked.

Mortimer looked at her in astonishment.

“Pass me the butter,” he said savagely.

There was silence for a moment.

“What is jute bagging, Eugene?” she asked modestly.

“I don’t know.”

“Do you think the duty on it should be increased?”

“No.”

Mrs. Mortimer was discouraged. Her husband looked more fatigued than ever.

“Do you believe in free raw material, darling?”

“What damned nonsense!” exclaimed Mortimer, leaving the table and retiring to his library.

Mrs. Mortimer is now with her mother in Boston. I am inclined to think that she and Eugene may yet become reconciled.

## A HAUNTED MAN.

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THERE was something very mysterious about the fate of Walter Leonard. There were no seeds of insanity in his family, and he had never been at all dissipated; neither was he what they called a nervous man. Rather phlegmatic in temperament, he had had the reputation in college of being the coolest athlete that ever faced a great baseball or boating crisis.

As a lawyer he was calm, self-possessed, and impressive before a jury. He never lost his temper when opposing counsel attempted to annoy him. In fact, he was called "The Iceberg" by his associates at the bar.

His domestic life was happy. He had a congenial wife and two pretty children. As he had inherited a fortune there was no visible cloud on his horizon. Respected by men,

beloved by his family, and successful in his profession, he seemed a man to be envied.

One day Leonard entered his house just before dinner, looking more tired than usual. His wife met him in the hall, kissed him, and said :

“There was a man here to see you a few moments ago. He did not leave his name, but said he would return.”

Leonard's face had an anxious expression as he asked :

“Was he a tall man with a dark mustache?”

“Yes.”

Nothing more was said on the subject at that time, but as the days went by Mrs. Leonard noticed a great change in her husband. He was no longer cheerful and affectionate. He seemed to be oppressed by some secret sorrow. He seldom played with the children, and was taciturn at all times.

“That man was here again to-day,” remarked Mrs. Leonard to her silent spouse one evening at dinner.

“What man?” he asked, looking up nervously.

“The tall, dark man who failed to find you here about a week ago.”

“And he refused to leave his name?”

“Yes.”

After dinner Leonard sat in his library abstractedly smoking a cigar. Mrs. Leonard drew a chair toward him and took his hand in hers.

“What is the matter, Walter? There is something wrong with you. Surely I have the right to know your troubles. Tell me what makes you so blue.”

“I don’t know,” he answered, looking at her with something of his old, frank manner.

“What do you mean? You are evading me.”

“No. I told you the truth. So far as I know there is nothing in the world to give me cause for worry. I acknowledge, however, that I am terribly depressed.”

“Has that man anything to do with your present state of mind?” There was an

anxious echo in her voice that her husband seemed to catch. He kissed her on the forehead, and drew her nearer to him.

“Again I must make answer that I don’t know.”

“How very strange. I don’t understand.”

“Neither do I. That man has been pursuing me for ten days. Wherever I go I hear of him. When I reach my office in the morning, I am told that a tall man with a dark mustache has called on me and that he refused to leave his name or state his business. He never waits for me, but politely remarks that he will come in again later. My clerks are beginning to look upon him as a permanent practical joke. One of them followed him once, but lost him in the crowd on Broadway. At the restaurant where I generally get my luncheon I have heard of him several times. He is always asking for me, but is never willing to await my coming. The queer part of it is that he is constantly in my mind. I dream of him at night. I would recognize him anywhere. His face is

as familiar to me as yours, and yet I know that I have never seen him."

Leonard rose in evident agitation, and lighted a fresh cigar. When he had reseated himself his wife said:

"You won't believe me, Walter, I know right well, but the truth is that you are over-worked, and that you smoke too much. It may be that you have offended this man in some way, and that he is trying to annoy you. Now, I want you to make me a promise. Go to the doctor's with me to-morrow morning, and if he advises you to take a vacation we'll go up to the mountains for a few days. What do you say?"

"Nonsense. There is nothing the matter with me, and I can't get away just now. Perhaps, however, I do smoke too much. I'll cut myself down to three cigars a day for a while, and see if your diagnosis is correct."

Thus the matter rested for a week more. The mysterious man had called twice at the house, but on both occasions Mrs. Leonard

had been away from home. She said nothing to her husband about the dark man's persistency, but she observed by Leonard's manner that he was still brooding over the being who was always on his track. Finally he became so nervous that he could neither work nor sleep. Without much further persuasion from his wife he agreed to see their family physician. The result was very much as she had predicted.

"You must quit work at once, Leonard," said the doctor. "You are on the verge of nervous prostration. Get out of the city to-day and don't come back for a month. Never mind all that," he continued, as Leonard began to plead business engagements. "You'll have to sacrifice your profession for your health for the next few weeks. You have been reversing the operation altogether too long."

And so they went with the children that day to the Catskills. At first Leonard improved rapidly. The mountain air seemed to have upon him a tonic effect, and quieted

his craving for tobacco. He climbed, drove, played tennis, romped with the children, and became, almost at a bound, his old self, cheerful, full of vitality, but always dignified, and to strangers rather unapproachable. He slept well, and his wife began to believe that the danger of a nervous collapse on his part was at an end.

One evening Leonard and his wife were seated upon the piazza of the hotel, watching the moonlit valley of the Hudson. It was an enchanting scene. The famous river looked like a silvery serpent writhing toward the sea. The trees cast long shadows across the well-tilled fields, and the verdure of early summer trembled in the caress of a gentle breeze. The vastness of the outlook brought to the spirit the peace that the sea in its infinity bestows. Suddenly Leonard remarked :

“I wonder what that fellow wanted.”

His wife made no reply. She was annoyed at this return to what had become between them a forbidden subject.

“I think I should have put a detective on his track,” continued Leonard, “but I feared the affair would thus get into the newspapers. But I am very curious about the man.” Then, lowering his voice, he said, “I dreamed of him again last night.”

“Hush, Walter. Don’t let your mind dwell on that crank. Perhaps it was some friend of yours who is fond of practical joking.”

Leonard made no further reference to the subject, and later in the evening appeared to have forgotten all about the tall man with the dark mustache. Two days passed and his wife heard no more from him regarding his mysterious visitor. Nevertheless, she felt instinctively that her husband was not improving as rapidly as he had at first. He had returned to his old habit of over-indulgence in tobacco, in spite of her constant protest against the offending cigars. He gave up his mountain climbing and spent a good deal of time in moody reverie. He was restless at night, and once or twice muttered

something in his sleep about telling "the man to wait."

One evening at supper Leonard and his wife were seated in the deserted dining-room after a long drive through the forest. The lawyer seemed more cheerful than usual, and actually laughed outright at a remark of his wife, more witty than a woman often makes. Just at that moment one of the waiters approached them and said :

"There's a gentleman on the piazza who wishes to see you, Mr. Leonard. He has been waiting nearly an hour."

Mrs. Leonard turned pale and her husband changed color.

"Did he give you a card or his name?" he asked huskily.

"No, sir."

"He's a tall, dark man, you say?"

The waiter looked surprised for an instant, and then said "Yes, sir."

Without more ado Leonard hastened toward the piazza, and his wife followed him. There was no one in sight when they

reached the doorway. Leonard stood still for a moment, looking about him in a dazed way. Then he stepped to the office desk and asked the clerk if he knew anything about a man who had been awaiting him.

“ Yes, Mr. Leonard. He stood in the doorway there only a moment ago. I’ll send a boy in search of him.”

No trace of the mysterious caller could be found. He had disappeared as suddenly and completely as a drop of rain when it strikes the surface of a pond. That evening Leonard was taken to bed suffering from a high fever. Toward midnight he became wildly delirious, and the hotel physician was recalled. He employed heroic treatment and toward sunrise the patient had grown more quiet. At four o’clock the doctor retired and Mrs. Leonard lay down upon the sofa for a short nap. When she awoke a half hour later, she looked toward the bed. It was empty. With a cry of despair she sprang up and rushed into the hall.

It was not until late in the afternoon that

Leonard was found. He was wandering in night attire upon a mountain side ten miles from the hotel. His face was haggard, and in his eyes was the glare of insanity.

“I *must* find him,” he cried, rushing madly away from the rescuing party. In his weakened condition he could only stumble forward for a short distance. They carried him away as gently as his wild struggles would permit them to, and two hours later he was in charge of a nurse and physician. He is now in an asylum, hopelessly insane. It was not overwork, nor tobacco, nor the man with the dark mustache that dethroned his reason—it was the combined influence of the three.

## AN INSIGNIFICANT MAN.

---

SOME years ago a girl was born dumb in a New Jersey town. She lived without speaking for fifteen years and then died from an attack of hysterical laughter. It may be argued that her peculiar death was due to the fact that she lived in New Jersey, but to the broad-minded man her experience has more than a local significance. He who watches in silence the absurdities of human life as they present themselves in a great city, or as they are illustrated in the newspapers, finds himself, according to his temperament, either a Democritus or an Heraclitus. He may die either of laughter or of tears.

“Why do you not tell us stories of men known to fame?” wrote a friend to me a few days ago. “History, not fiction, is what your readers crave.”

My correspondent takes a very narrow view of a writer's province. He would never have died of laughter in a New Jersey town. Can he not grasp the fact that there is as much human nature in "Mr. ——, of —— Street and —— Avenue," as in Chauncey M. Depew or James G. Blaine? The average man as an exponent of contemporary life is of more value than he who is world-renowned. Exceptional men are interesting; average men are of vital significance.

"There is not a passenger in this car," remarked a well-known journalist to me a few days ago on an elevated train, "who could not, if cleverly 'pumped,' give the public a story from real life that would be both entertaining and suggestive."

I looked about me, and my eyes finally rested upon a quiet, inconsequential little man who was reading a newspaper in the opposite seat. He had as uninteresting a face as you could find in a day's walk, and he looked as though he had never done anything but eat, sleep, and talk about the weather. I

picked him out as a good subject for an experiment.

“I defy you to obtain from that commonplace man over there an anecdote from his own life possessing the slightest element of amusement or instruction.”

The journalist smiled, and whispered his acceptance of my challenge. When our victim left the train we followed him.

“I beg your pardon,” said my friend, as he joined the little man, “but I wish you would look at my card here and give me a moment’s conversation.”

He of the insignificant face looked up in astonishment, glanced at the card, seemed to recognize the name thereon, and smiled courteously.

“I am at your service, sir.”

“Thank you. My intrusion is due to a conversation with my friend here regarding a proposition, laid down by me, that any passenger in the train we have just left, could, if so disposed, tell a story from his own experience that would be of interest to the public at

large. Hoping that you would be willing to help me prove my point I have taken this unceremonious mode of gaining you as an ally. Could you not, in a few words, tell us the most exciting incident in your life?"

A gleam of malicious merriment shot from the eyes of the little man. He stepped back a few paces and handled his cane nervously.

"Perhaps the most startling incident in my career occurred a few days ago," he said slowly. "I knocked down a census enumerator for asking me impudent questions."

Then he turned his back and walked down the street.

"I—I knew he had in him at least one good story," muttered my journalistic friend in a dazed way, as he watched his victim disappearing in the crowd.

## A MODERN NARCISSUS.

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“**O**LD VERACITY,” as he is affectionately called, is one of the talkative members of an uptown club. He is full of reminiscences—if nothing else. A few nights ago he remarked to a few choice spirits seated near him :

“Did you ever hear about the suicide of Dick Robertson, boys ?”

“No,” chorused the crowd

“Well, Dick was a great fellow. He was considered the handsomest man in New York thirty-five years ago. I have never seen his equal for physical beauty. He was a little above medium height, as graceful as a poem by Aldrich, and as modest as a butterfly in winter. His face was almost supernaturally impressive. I cannot do justice to it in words, but when I wish to ease my

æsthetic cravings I call up from a closet in my memory the picture of Dick Robertson. He was, indeed, a joy forever."

The old man fell into a retrospective silence, and no one felt like disturbing him. Finally Toodles, who is not impressionable, remarked :

"And you say this stunning fellah killed himself?"

"Yes. You see he was very sensitive, and the admiration he received made him morbid. Wherever he went, he was gazed at as though he were a being from another world. I know for a fact that people used to come to New York from the country just to catch a glimpse of Dick Robertson. His mail was enormous. He received at least fifty letters every day from women he had charmed. After a while he began to shun society. He remained at home, neglected his affairs, and received only a few chosen friends. He complained to them bitterly that his beauty had become a curse to him. We used to try to cheer him with the hope that as he ap-

proached middle age he might become less ornamental. Our efforts to overcome his melancholia were futile. He grew constantly more desperate, for even his incessant confinement and low spirits did not mar his beauty in the least. One day he shot himself dead. He left a note saying that he had gone to "a land where a handsome man is not looked upon as a dime museum freak?"

"Old Veracity was lying again," whispered Toodles to me as we left the club.

"How do you know?"

"Why, they didn't have dime museums thirty-five years ago, and the word 'freak' was unknown."

Clever fellow, that Toodles!

## TWO BROWNS.

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THERE are two John T. Browns among the members of a famous New York club. Under most circumstances this fact would not have much significance; but as these men happen to detest each other, various peculiar complications have arisen since they joined the club several years ago. John T. Brown, the elder, is a successful business man, somewhat Gradgrindish in his mental tendencies. John T. Brown, the younger, is a poet and novelist, who could not tell a bill of lading from a protested draft. They are both bachelors.

The commercial Brown has always been outspoken in his denunciation of literary men. He considers the highest achievement of the pen the production of a perfect business letter. Brown, the author, on the other

hand, speaks sarcastically about men who devote their lives to money getting, and know nothing of the pleasures of the imagination. Brown, the author, is often posted for non-payment of dues. Brown, the merchant, never is.

The mutual friends of these hostile Browns have attempted to persuade one or the other of them to add an "e" to his surname, in the hope that the antagonism between the two men would be lessened if their names were not exactly alike. Brown, the merchant, refused to take this step, as he considered the final "e" an affectation. Brown, the poet, had made his reputation without the aid of the vowel, and felt that he could not afford to risk his literary fame by changing his signature. They advanced respectively the same line of argument when it was proposed that one of them should part his name in the middle.

Thus the matter stood when these uncompromising rivals met a handsome and wealthy widow at a dinner party one evening, and

fell in love with her. Brown, the elder, was angered at the brilliancy of the author's conversation, but when he reached home he began to reflect that his position as a prosperous business man would be more apt to appeal to a sensible widow than the Bohemianism of Brown, the writer. Nevertheless, he realized that all women admire a man who can give a literary flavor to his discourse, so the following day he purchased a book of poems and committed several verses to memory. Then he decided to write a flowery proposal of marriage to the widow. He would show her that he was more versatile than the world believed.

John T. Brown, the author, reached a very different conclusion regarding his best mode of procedure. He knew that his rival was dangerous in that he possessed a flourishing business and a large bank account. Widows, he argued, are apt to prefer check books to books of verse. Thereupon he resolved to send her a proposal worded in such a way

that she would at once recognize his business ability.

One day the widow received two notes, each of them signed "John T. Brown." The one penned by the merchant ran as follows:

DEAR MADAM :

Long ago in a fair garden of the east a lonely man was made happy by a gift from heaven. Since those remote days—about 6000 years ago, I believe, according to recent calculations—the companionship of a wife has been considered the richest treasure the world holds. To one who has wandered alone through this vale of tears, the thought of sharing with you the remainder of existence comes with intoxicating force. As the poet says :

O woman ! lovely woman ! nature made thee  
To temper man ; we had been brutes without you.  
Angels are painted fair to look like you ;  
There's in you all that we believe of heaven,  
Amazing brightness, purity, and truth,  
Eternal joy and everlasting love.

Need I say more, my dear madam ? I offer you my hand and heart in the joyous hope that

my Eden may soon be glorified by the fairest Eve that ever walked the dusty paths of earth.

The note sent by Brown the author, was worded thus :

DEAR MADAM :

Hereby please accept from me an offer of marriage. Hoping to hear favorably from you at your earliest convenience, I remain, etc.

The widow has married again, but her name is not Mrs. John T. Brown. There was not enough literature in the merchant's note to please her, and there was too much business in the author's. She does not know to this day, however, that her unsuccessful lovers changed skins when they reached the crisis.

## THE DRUMMER.

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BEING a wanderer on the face of the earth—a rolling stone that gathereth not the fatted calf—I have often come into close contact with drummers—called with more courtesy commercial travelers. I doubt if there is in the world a more interesting class than these peripatetic purveyors. There are, of course, good drummers and bad drummers, drummers who drink and drummers who pray, drummers who read and drummers who don't; but there are certain general characteristics that pertain to them all.

The drummer who has had even a very short career on the road is of necessity worldly wise. He sees many men and cities and quickly learns a vast deal of useful knowledge regarding human nature. As a general thing he grows pessimistic and finds

that railroad restaurant fare tends to sour the milk of human kindness. Nevertheless, I have seen a drummer quiet a baby in a sleeping car when the weary mother had shown herself unequal to the task.

My first acquaintance with a "traveling man" led me into a scrape. I met him some years ago in a smoking car, and, much to my surprise, he began to talk of Spencer, Huxley, and Darwin, and display an accurate knowledge of the writings of the great theologians. He had read Bishop Butler, Paley, Dr. McCosh, and the late lamented Newman. He was well equipped to discuss the great question of Religion versus Science. I found by inquiry that he was selling a drug called Anti-Nicotine, a preparation that claimed to overcome the evil effects of over-indulgence in tobacco. His mental cultivation made this admission a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*. During the course of our conversation he advised me to accompany him to a certain hotel in a city we were approaching, on the ground that he

was well acquainted with the proprietor and could guarantee for us attentive service.

I accepted his advice, and as we approached the desk stepped in front of him to register. The clerk had recognized my companion as a drummer. After I had inscribed my name and address the clerk said to me :

“ Will you have a sample room ? ”

I looked at him in astonishment.

“ A sample room ? ” I remarked. “ What do you mean ? If it is a room with whisky and cigars adjoining my chamber, and there is no extra charge connected therewith, you may give me a sample room.”

The clerk's face displayed amazement, while my drummer laughed heartily. I learned then and there that a drummer who carries a large amount of baggage requires an extra room at a hotel in which to display to tradesmen samples of the goods he sells. I have not been astonished since then when a boy, loafing about the entrance of an inn, cries out to me : “ Carry your samples, sir ? ”

Much traveling has given me the cut of a drummer.

The following evening I was astonished to find that my commercial friend, who had studied the most tremendous problems of the soul, was a hard drinker. The proprietor of the hotel met me in the lobby about eight o'clock and remarked :

“Your friend there, who is selling Anti-Nicotine, is in the barroom with a drummer who is peddling cigars. The Anti-Nicotine man has smoked and drunk too much to-day. If he should add an Anti-Alcohol medicine to his stock I fear he would be ruined.”

I entered the barroom just in time to hear my drummer say, in a voice that was thick and unsteady :

“Now, old man, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go up to my room and get a dozen bottles of Anti-Nicotine for you, if you'll give me a box of your best cigars.”

Since that time I've met drummers of all kinds. On the whole, I think there has been

a marked improvement in their habits in the last few years. The competition in commercial life has grown so sharp that the old-fashioned traveling man who played poker on the cars and spent his evenings close to a whisky bottle has been obliged either to revise his methods or give up his place to steadier men. Of course, the influences surrounding a life "on the road" are not elevating. Sleeping cars and hotels offer few chances for social intercourse of a desirable nature. The drummer must be, of necessity, a lonely man. He may have a few business acquaintances in every city, but there are hours and days when he is obliged to depend upon strangers for contact with his kind. The result is that he gets into the habit of adapting himself to the customs of the men he meets: and no one who has traveled widely will deny that a sociable tendency of this kind is full of peril.

Not long ago I met a drummer who had been on the road for four months. He was depressed and homesick, but did not expect

to see his wife and children for two months more.

“What do you do when you get down-hearted?” I asked.

“Smoke. If it wasn’t for cigars, I should go crazy.”

“Do you never drink?”

“Not a drop. It would be my ruination.”

His clear eyes and brilliant complexion proved that he had never toyed with the paint when it is red.

Another drummer, who had only one bad habit, I ran across one Sunday evening not many weeks ago in a Western city. I offered him a cigar. He refused it. “Will you go and have a nip then?” “No, I indulge in nothing stronger than water.”

“Here,” thought I to myself, “I have captured the perfect drummer. I must get his autograph.”

“I have only one bad habit,” he remarked. “I buy a lottery ticket once a month. My indulgence in this dissipation costs me \$12.00 a year. By the way, I have not pur-

chased a ticket for the next drawing. Come in here a moment."

We were passing a large hotel.

"But it's Sunday night," I suggested. "You can't get a lottery ticket now."

I was mistaken. He walked boldly to the book-stand, asked for a "winner," received an imposing looking coupon, paid his dollar, and walked out.

"Surely," I thought, "New York may have some evil customs, but it does not sell lottery tickets in public on Sunday night."

## CONRAD HIMMEL'S FALL.

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THE rise and fall of Conrad Himmel has never attracted as widespread attention as the romantic career of Bismarck, though Conrad's downfall took place about the same time as that of the German Chancellor. It may be that because Conrad kept a saloon on Greenwich Street, New York, and did not know a *modus vivendi* from a *status quo*, his fate has not created as much excitement as resulted from the forced retirement of a man who founded an empire. However, there is as valuable a lesson to be learned from Himmel's overthrow as from Bismarck's.

Conrad was the only son of German peasants who came to this country about twenty-five years ago. The elder Himmel opened a beer saloon on the West Side, and, as time went by, prospered financially. He sold

malt drinks at a net profit of four hundred per cent. and kept on good terms with the police. He brought up his son with great care and cultivated in him a high ambition. He found in Conrad a nature susceptible to paternal guidance and alive to the vast possibilities pertaining to a beer-dispensing career in a thirsty neighborhood.

When the elder Himmels had passed away, Conrad found himself in possession of a handsome bank account and a flourishing business. "He who drinks beer thinks beer," says Jean Paul. He who sells beer, however, thinks about his growing surplus and smiles. Conrad Himmel was a happy man, and his customers found him one of the most genial proprietors who ever stood behind a bar. To see him in his shirt-sleeves drawing the foaming extract at night was an experience long to be remembered. He looked like Gambrinus in his youth. The saloon, under the influence of Conrad's popularity, increased its clientele; and if spirits return to earth, the elder Himmel must have

taken pleasure in the fruits borne by the education he had given his son.

Conrad married a pretty little German girl, who bore him five children. She loved him well, and as the years passed the Himmels became famous in the neighborhood for the charm of their domestic life. Contented, good-natured, prosperous, beloved by their children, Conrad and his wife were envied by all who knew them—for there is a vast amount of misery in the vicinity of Greenwich Street.

It was not until late last fall that a cloud came over the Himmel household. Mrs. Himmel and the older children felt its influence but could not divine its origin nor detect its character. The saloon was as flourishing as ever, the babies were well, there was no apparent disaster impending: but still they all recognized the presence of a mysterious something that depressed their spirits.

Perhaps a change in Conrad's habits and manner had something to do with all this.

He looked less cheerful than of old. His eyes did not sparkle with their former brilliancy. His cheeks had lost their ruddy hue. His wife asked him if he was sick, but he laughed with his usual heartiness and ate his dinner with so much enthusiasm that her anxiety was allayed. Nevertheless there was something queer about him. He spent more time away from the saloon than had been his wont. He was especially liable to be absent in the evening and the brunt of the beer peddling fell upon his assistant.

As the winter went by the Himmels grew a good deal more worried about Conrad. In the bosom of his family he was distraught and at times rather ugly. At meals he had begotten the habit of drumming on the table in a most annoying manner. He would pound away for a moment, then glance at his wife inquiringly and smile joyously. When asked what he was doing he would look sheepish and nervously apply himself to his food.

Mrs. Himmel was not an excitable woman.

In truth she was rather phlegmatic in temperament, and for a long time her husband's increasing oddity annoyed her but gave her no serious alarm. She argued that he had done a great deal of hard work and that his disinclination to pass all of his evenings in the saloon was perfectly natural. As for the table-drumming and his self-absorption, they did not appear to be very significant phenomena.

But there came a time when Mrs. Himmel could not blind herself to the fact that her husband was in a condition deserving of close attention. He had become a victim of insomnia, and often spent the entire night walking up and down the room, muttering to himself; and now and then humming a snatch of song and beating time with his arm. The poor little woman would lie in bed and weep as she watched her afflicted Conrad, and wondered what had driven him into such a feverish state.

Finally the good wife decided to consult a famous specialist in nervous disorders. She

knew that it would cost a great sum of money to persuade the busy doctor to come down to Greenwich Street and surreptitiously examine her husband; but what was wealth compared with Conrad's sanity? One morning she dressed herself with some care and started on her errand. With the prudence often characteristic of a non-excitabile temperament, before she visited the specialist she went to the bank where Conrad kept his account.

"How large a balance has Mr. Himmel at present?" she asked.

"None at all," was the startling answer. "He overdrew his account a month ago."

Mrs. Himmel never knew how she reached home. What did it mean, this lack of funds at the bank? Surely it could not be that Conrad was false to her! This idea had never entered her mind before. At first she rejected it as absurd. But let such a suspicion once enter a wife's head and it will give her no peace until she has established its unreasonableness. A jealous woman is

not like a careless author. She insists upon seeing the proofs.

It must be acknowledged that Mrs. Himmel had some grounds for her distrust of Conrad. Did not the theory that another woman had won his affection explain his absence from home in the evening? His neglect of the children, his coldness toward his wife, the reckless extravagance that had caused him to overdraw his bank account, his tendency to hum love songs at night all combined to convince Mrs. Himmel that she had a rival.

As was before remarked, Mrs. Himmel was not easily aroused, and at the crisis she had now reached she displayed great coolness and common sense. She did not accuse her husband of treachery, nor did she change her manner toward him in the least. She did what few women would have done under the circumstances — she sat down calmly and thought. Now, when a woman like Mrs. Himmel sets to thinking, there is no immediate outcome of the process. But after a time

a decision of some importance is pretty certain of being reached. Mrs. Himmel, at this most fateful time, performed a very clever bit of ratiocination. She argued thus: If Conrad loves another woman that woman must live somewhere. Conrad is not the kind of man to beget a passion for a woman who lives nowhere. Now, if Conrad loves a woman who lives somewhere, he must know where she lives. If Conrad knows where she lives, he must know how to get there. If he knows how to get there, it is probable that he does get there. Now, if Conrad loves a woman who lives somewhere, and if he knows how to go to her and does go to her, it is certain that people who do not love her can learn how to go to her and can go to her.

Mrs. Himmel was fatigued after she had reached, by the above method, this conclusion, and was obliged to retire. She slept soundly, in spite of the fact that Conrad was even more restless than usual. If he had known what was the basis of her dreams that

night he would have stopped humming and done a little useful thinking. But Conrad was not a mind-reader.

The following day Mrs. Himmel continued her syllogistic exercise. She spent eight or ten hours with major premises, minor premises, conclusions, compound propositions, and other things of that kind, and came out of the ordeal a subdued, sorrowful, but determined woman. She had made up her mind to follow her husband, the erring Conrad, when he left the saloon on the next evening.

Mrs. Himmel had a brother whose mental machinery resembled hers in construction. He had never employed his reasoning powers to any great advantage, however, and had not made a success of life. He spent most his time hanging about his brother-in-law's saloon and drinking beer—for which he never paid. Mrs. Himmel was fond of this ne'er-do-well, and decided to make him her ally in her effort to discover her rival.

The conversation between Mrs. Himmel

and her brother was pathetic. He admitted that he had observed the change in Conrad's habits and manner. It was the subject of much gossip in the saloon. At first he was inclined to be extremely pugnacious. If Conrad had been untrue to Mrs. Himmel, he would have to answer to the brother. It was true that Conrad had always given him all the beer he wanted, but what did free beer amount to when honor was concerned?

Mrs. Himmel wisely calmed the excited mood of her fraternal ally. It would not do to have a scandal. Their exalted position in the neighborhood demanded diplomacy in dealing with the affair. She suggested that they dog the footsteps of her wandering boy on the following night, and when they had discovered the source of Conrad's eccentricities they could then decide upon their further movements. After a long argument, maintained with much brilliancy on both sides, she finally convinced her brother that her plan was the better one.

For the first time in her life, Mrs. Himmel was nervous when she set out with her brother, about seven o'clock the next night. Conrad's tall form was about half a block ahead of them, and his pursuers had no difficulty in keeping him in sight. Conrad never hurried. He slowly walked eastward along Bleeker Street, and finally boarded an up-town horse-car. Mrs. Himmel hastened forward and entered a hack at the corner. The brother, who had taken one glass too much of Conrad's beer, directed the driver to follow the horse-car.

Mrs. Himmel, as she rolled up Sixth Avenue, felt as though she were going to execution. She had had such a happy life with Conrad! Their home had been for so many years a bower of bliss—and beer! And now another woman, a silken serpent, had destroyed their peace! It was too hard. She could not bear it; and she wept in silent agony.

At Thirty-ninth Street her brother, who had kept his head out of the window during

the entire drive, directed the coachman to turn toward Broadway.

"He's left the car," he said to Mrs. Himmel. At the corner of Broadway the conspirators left the hack. They stood on the sidewalk in bewilderment. There was a crowd around them, and the noise and bustle of opera night pervaded the thoroughfare in front of the Metropolitan.

"Where is he?" whispered Mrs. Himmel to her brother.

"There he goes," he answered, seizing her by the arm and urging her toward the doorway. He was right. Conrad was in the lobby, buying a first gallery ticket.

Then the whole bitter truth flashed upon Mrs. Himmel. Her Conrad had become hopelessly addicted to the Wagnerian habit—and they were ruined.

## A PHONOGRAPHIC TRAGEDY.

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GEORGE OSBORNE'S marital infelicity dates from the day on which he first became fascinated by a phonograph. He had read a great deal about the wonderful possibilities connected with the instrument, but he had never seen one. He was persuaded by an eloquent canvasser one day, not long ago, to rent a phonograph for use in his office. He spent several hours learning how to manipulate the machine the afternoon it arrived. The clerks and office-boys deserted their work to watch Osborne with his new toy.

At dinner that evening Osborne described to his wife the remarkable achievements of his phonograph; how it reproduced a song sung by his head clerk, and a banjo solo per-

formed by one of the boys. Osborne was always an entertaining talker at dinner. He believed that jesting and digesting have a very close connection with each other. His wife was very much impressed with his description of the phonograph, and determined to go to the office on the following morning.

Osborne told his wife that he was going to spend the evening at the club. Instead of so doing, however, he went to his office and played with the phonograph until midnight. He had never been so happy since the day his wife accepted him. During the evening he sang into the instrument some verses of a love ditty that he had recently heard at his club. They ran as follows :

I stood by her side to-night

And she sang a song to me ;

A song as full of sadness

As sweet in its melody.

A song of love and sorrow,

Of a love that came too late.

Did she know—that fair-haired woman—

She had made me curse my fate ?

Curse myself for the folly  
The blindness of youth had wrought ;  
Curse myself for the wisdom  
That had been so dearly bought ?

And the twilight grew to darkness,  
The song with its sadness died.  
“ God ! How I love this woman ! ”  
My heart in its anguish cried.

And all through the weary years  
My soul shall sink with the weight  
Of a love so full of sadness—  
Of a love that came too late.

When Mrs. Osborne reached the office in the morning, she found that her husband had gone out on a matter of business. One of the clerks offered to operate the phonograph for her. She was delighted with the instrument. The comic song and the banjo solo pleased her extremely, and she laughed heartily to hear her husband reciting “ Bingen on the Rhine.” Then he began to sing. Mrs. Osborne’s face grew grave. “ I stood by her side to-night.” “ Did she know—that fair-haired woman—she had made me curse

my fate?" This was awful. Mrs. Osborne burst into tears and left the office hurriedly.

All this happened some weeks ago. Osborne is still trying to convince his wife that no fair-haired woman ever sang to him in the gloaming, and that he has no personal acquaintance with a love that came too late.

## A SNUBBED HUSBAND.

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MY friend Jenks, who has been married about a year, met me on Fifth Avenue a few days ago. He was walking uptown at a rapid pace, and his handsome face was flushed.

“Come with me, old man,” he said, seizing me by the arm. “I have just received a telegram saying that a crisis had been reached at the house. I don’t want to go home alone. If you love me you’ll stick by me, my dear fellow.”

I did not fully grasp the significance of his words, but, as I like Jenks, I agreed to his proposal. His nervousness increased as we approached his house. As we entered the hall he bounded upstairs and left me to find my way to the library. After a short time Jenks rejoined me. He was very pale.

“I—I don’t think they want me up there,” he remarked. “Somehow I seemed to be in everybody’s way.”

He brought out a box of cigars and a decanter of brandy.

“I must have something to quiet me,” he said in a desperate way.

Under certain circumstances highly strung temperaments crave alcohol and tobacco. Therein lies a great peril to such men as Jenks. In the present instance the excited husband pursued the worst possible course. As he walked up and down the room, puffing a cigar, the calmness that he sought seemed further off than before. Hearing a step in the hall, he hurried to the door. The nurse was going upstairs. He spoke to her, but she returned no answer.

“Snubbed again!” he exclaimed petulantly. “Actually, old man, I don’t amount to anything in my own house to-day.”

Pretty soon the doctor came into the library.

“Is my wife in any danger?” asked Jenks flightily.

“Yes. She’s in imminent peril of—having a baby,” answered the doctor humorously. Then, seeing me, he turned on his heel and left the room.

“Confound him !” exclaimed Jenks. “He treats me like a boy.”

An hour passed slowly by. Jenks was gradually approaching a state of collapse. An unusual bustle was heard upstairs. My friend lighted a fresh cigar and took another stiff dose of brandy. Then somebody in the hall remarked, “It’s twins.”

I rushed from the house and left Jenks to his fate.

## A LUCKY PARAGRAPHER.

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A YOUNG American is now traveling in Europe because he cracked a good joke. He was a sub-editor on a leading Chicago newspaper. The proprietor of the journal became a victim of melancholia. He had worked hard to make his newspaper successful, and when the rich fruits of years of labor began to fall into his lap he found his nerves shattered and his constitution ruined. He kept at work in the hope that his former health would return to him. Insomnia sapped his strength; he grew irritable and unreasonable. He had been a great lover of humor, but search the press as he might, he could not find a joke that gave him the slightest pleasure. In despair he even perused the columns of *London Punch* in the

hope that something therein might strike him as funny. Of course, under such treatment his melancholy increased.

The editorial paragrapher, who is now on the other side of the water, watched his chief closely. He realized that the great man, if he could once again laugh at a newspaper joke, would feel that the gate blocking the highroad to health had been opened. For weeks he endeavored to write a paragraph that would bring a smile to the wan face of his employer. He would work late into the night trying to strike a funny idea. He searched his "Cyclopædia of Humor of all Ages" for a joke that could be effectively redressed. In vain! The paragrapher could not make the gloomy countenance of his chief change its expression for an instant. He began to break down himself, and finally grew so nervous that he found it impossible to do his usual work. Thereupon he decided to resign, and so wrote as follows to the target of his useless wit:

"Dear Sir: After several years in your em-

ploy, I feel it a difficult matter to leave your staff. However, I am obliged to confess that I am not as funny as I should be. In fact, the real cause of my departure is 'no joke.' I have thought of giving you laughing gas on the sly. But my better nature overcame the temptation. Trusting that you may yet find somebody who will make you smile, I remain," etc.

By a strange chance this note tickled the fancy of the melancholy proprietor. He laughed over it until the tears ran down his face. Sending for the discouraged paragrapher he placed a check for \$1000 in his hand and said :

"Go to Europe for six months, young man. Your place on my paper shall be kept for you until you return."

## SEEKING AN IDEA.

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YOU have heard of the man who had only one idea and that a wrong one. I am inclined to think that he led a happy life. He endured no nervous strain. Serenely tenacious of his misconception, he looked forth upon the world from the impregnable stronghold of concentrated egotism. He was fully satisfied with the only offspring of his mental process and was blind to the fact that the solitary child of his brain was a cripple. Perhaps, after all, an oyster is happier than a poet. If the chief end of man is peace, why should we not long to become bivalves? They get into a stew now and then, it is true, but before death they are always able to make both ends meet. This is not *sic semper* with a poet.

Now the hero of the tale from real life

that I am about to relate was not a man of one idea. In fact he prided himself upon having just fifty-two ideas a year. Perhaps you have heard of him. He writes under the *nom-de-plume* of "Mercury." He took this title, as he says, because his writings make quick silver for him.

As I said, he depends upon his brain to furnish him at least half a hundred ideas every twelve months. That is, he pays his landlady and washerwoman from the proceeds of the yarns he writes for a certain pictorial weekly. Fortunately for him he has a small income from money left to him by his parents. It is not sufficient, however, to support him, so he vigorously wields a pen to keep him from penury.

Not many weeks ago Arnold was dismayed to find that his weekly idea was not forthcoming. His brain was as barren as the fields of Almadan after the Caliph's hosts had passed that way. Now, a literary man who has nothing to write about is fully as happy as a dragoon who has lost his legs. Arnold

suffered intense mental anguish for two days. You who have never tried to coax an idea from the empty chambers of your dilapidated brain cannot begin to comprehend the tortures endured by my unhappy hero. At first he could not believe that what he sometimes called his "think tank" had run dry. He drank brandy, he smoked cigars, he even took a hypodermic injection of morphine, but his imagination failed to respond. "Mercury" was very low in the tube, and he actually shed tears as he wrote a note to the editor of the pictorial weekly announcing his inability to furnish a story at the time appointed.

"Look here, old man," he said to me the next day, "I am in a bad way. I am startled at this sudden failure of my conceptive powers. Why, a year ago I was worried by my inability to work up all the ideas that came into my head. Look at me now, I am pale, nervous, absolutely devoid of suggestions. I have tried drugs, but they were not effective. I have attempted to write at the

witching hour when churchyards yawn—but I did all the yawning myself. What, oh, what shall I do to be saved?”

“You are played out, Arnold,” I answered. “You need a change of scene. The idea you seek is surely somewhere in the land. You may find it at Bar Harbor, Long Branch, Saratoga. Fly from here at once. The arid soil of your imagination needs the revivifying influence of a watering-place.”

He looked at me intently.

“You are right. I must go away. But I dare not go alone. I dread the awful vacuity of my once teeming brain. Come with me to Saratoga. Perhaps the sparkling waters of those famous springs will add vigor to my pen and save me from the awful fate of a squeezed and juiceless lemon.”

Two days later my friend and I were whirling along the banks of the Hudson toward the New World's Monte Carlo.

“There is inspiration in that sight,” remarked Arnold, pointing to the mountains in the west, behind which the sun in golden

glory was going down. "It is not strange that Drake and Irving found a pathway there to the throne of Immortality."

I was pleased at the remark. It showed that Arnold's brain cells had not entirely collapsed.

"You *may* find your idea before we reach the Springs," I suggested.

"No"; he returned gloomily. "And what if I did? It would mean to me fifty dollars, perhaps; but nothing more. I am one of a thousand who can write a story of ephemeral interest. I know my limitations. I should rejoice in fame, in that intoxication that pertains to success in literature, but I do not overestimate my skill. Already I fear that I have shot my arrow and missed the mark. This is a materialistic age, old fellow, and the man who has money wields more power than he who possesses friends. I once had glorious dreams. They were destroyed by the persistent efforts of my tailor to collect his bill. We grow old early, we young Americans. If we have not 'made our pile' at thirty

we are placed on the list of failures and are snubbed by lesser men who have large bank accounts."

So in this pessimistic strain we talked until the train rolled into Saratoga. We secured rooms at the Grand Atlantic and Arnold at once began his search for an idea. On the morning after our arrival he came to me and said :

"I think I have detected favorable symptoms in my case, old man. A conversation I just overheard has roused my imagination to unwonted activity. I'll tell you about it later on."

At dinner he explained his mysterious remarks.

"You see," he said, "as I was smoking a cigar after breakfast, I heard two men near me talking about a girl who had just passed through the office. I had been struck by her beauty at the time, and was glad to learn her name. They discussed her good points in detail, and dwelt at length upon the fact that she is an orphan and worth two million dol-

lars when she comes of age. For the first time in two weeks I had an idea."

"Yes? What was it?"

"Never mind, now; I'll tell you to-morrow."

The following morning I was surprised to see Arnold talking to a very handsome young woman on the front piazza. He was conversing in a most animated way, and as I watched them I saw that the eloquence of my friend was making a strong impression on his *vis-à-vis*. During the day the flirtation, if such it could be called, went forward rapidly. The maiden was chaperoned by an aunt, who seemed to be fascinated by Arnold's brilliancy.

"You have had good luck with your idea," I remarked late that evening, as my friend and I smoked our cigars in the café.

"Perhaps so. Surely it's the *chef d'œuvre* of my imagination. If it pays as well as I think it will, my fortune's made."

I was shocked at this mercenary way of looking at the matter, but knew my friend too

well to expostulate. I had urged him to come to Saratoga in search of an idea. He said he had found one. Surely I would have exhibited extreme bad taste if I had interfered in his manifestation thereof.

“How are you getting on?” I asked him, a few days later.

“Pretty well. I’ve got the aunt solid, but the ‘idea’ is elusive. I must introduce you to them. Perhaps you can help me out a bit.”

That evening I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Elmore and her niece, Miss Davidson.

“I am very glad to know you,” said the latter. “Mr. Arnold talks about you constantly.”

“Does he, indeed? I feel highly flattered; but I fear he has not chosen a very interesting topic.”

I gave her my arm, and we strolled down the piazza. She was a dark, red-cheeked woman, who looked more Spanish than American. As she glanced up at me and

smiled maliciously, I realized that she was an accomplished flirt.

“Poor Arnold,” I thought. “I fear he has run across the liveliest idea he has ever encountered.”

Before our walk was at an end she exclaimed petulantly:

“I don’t like you. You are not nearly so pliable as your friend.”

“Do you admire a man of wax?” I asked.

“I like him better than one of iron,” she replied.

“*De gustibus non est disputandum.* The man of iron makes the better husband.”

“Perhaps, as a general rule. I prefer the man of wax. Good-night!”

“Permit me to congratulate you,” I said to Arnold, a few moments later.

“Upon what! Upon the fact that I have spent the evening with my idea’s aunt?”

“Don’t be cross, old man. I am not your rival. I have no use for a wife with a fortune of two millions. I think, however, that you are a sure winner. Go ahead, and put

your matter to the test. I have an inkling that you will win success."

The following day Arnold came to me in an agitated state.

"I am going back to New York at once," he said.

"What for? To buy the ring?"

"No. I have got an idea. I shall write a story entitled 'How I was Jilted.' I can get fifty dollars for it—but," and there was a sob in his voice, "I've lost two millions."

## THE COST OF NEW YORK LIFE.

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A FAMOUS humorist, who is funny once a week and is growing rich, has recently cussed and discussed in his quaint way the subject of "Living in New York." Of course, this laughter-begetting wielder of the pen makes sport, that he who reads may smile. Nevertheless the subject has a serious side. From a financial point of view, it is not funny to live in New York.

The dollars-and-cents side of the topic is that of which I now treat, and I feel that the humorist mentioned above will agree with me that it is hard to make both ends meet in the metropolis. It is an undisputed fact that the majority of New Yorkers spend more than they earn. There is nothing funny about this.

Let us then approach a few well authenticated figures with due solemnity. Remember, that Micawber, a shiftless, thriftless fellow, realized that happiness lies on the credit side of the page, and misery on the debit. Pause, ere you peruse this article, and size up your financial situation. If you are in debt, don't read what follows; it will make you sad.

So much for the prologue. Let us get down to facts. The average New Yorker—by that I mean the man who makes a fair amount of money every year, and is under the same influences that surround the bulk of our citizens—is environed by temptations that war against the welfare of his exchequer. He leaves his house in the morning, and is at once under the necessity of parting with his loose change, forsooth, when money is always tight!

The first raid made upon his pocket-book is headed by a newsboy, marshaling a small army of morning journals. The tribute paid to this attack is from two to six cents, according to the victim's thirst for news. A few moments later, the target of monopoly

places five cents upon the glowing pile that daily rises beside the coffers of the elevated road. It may be that before this he has purchased a polish for his shoes by parting with a hard-earned nickel. Thus it is that, almost before the day is begun, the unhappy New Yorker is poorer by fifteen cents.

Of course most men in these days smoke cigars. Before our "hero" reaches his office, he expends twenty-five cents in obtaining two vanishing weeds. And, under the new tariff, where the tobacconist once cried "quarter," he now calls out "thirty cents."

Let us say, then, as a conservative estimate, that it has cost our subject between forty and fifty cents to get to his place of business. If he feels the need of a cocktail before he throws a day's work into his think-tank, he will be out of pocket fifteen cents more. It is now ten o'clock in the morning. At one o'clock that extravagant organ, the stomach, craves food. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ*. Food costs money, and we have already spoiled a dollar. But luncheon is a necessity, not a luxury; and our

hero snatches his hat and goes forth to his favorite restaurant. Here he meets a few friends, and an "appetizer" is unanimously agreed upon as essential to the welfare of the crowd. The victim of our system of treating is lucky if he does not ruin another dollar on the altar of good-fellowship—falsely so-called. Then comes a slight repast which may or may not cost an unreasonable sum. Too many cooks spoil the broth, and, likewise, too many cocktails destroy the appetite for food. Nevertheless, the ceremony of eating must be undergone, and the conscientious metropolitan finds that he is not displaying good form unless he toys at midday with a few oysters, a chicken croquette, or a slice of rare roast beef. And the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt the cashier feels.

A cigar after luncheon is *en règle*. The remains of a crisp five-dollar note, so joyous in its entirety at nine o'clock, are sacrificed to tobacco at two. Then, puffing his Havana, our hero returns to his office, determined to be economical for the rest of the day.

Alas, for the weakness of human resolutions. Man proposes to be abstemious; a friend suggests a drink after the toils of the day are at an end. Perhaps the libation is poured out at a bar, or mayhap at an uptown club. The result is the same. Another bill is either broken or contracted. Perhaps another cigar is smoked. At all events another nickel is dropped into Jay Gould's elevated slot.

There will be those who peruse this who will say that my victim of extravagance has only himself to blame because he spends \$2000 a year in a foolish way, but *descensus Averno facilis est*. Habits once contracted are hard to break, and New York is such a sociable town! The New Yorker who does not smoke or drink, who belongs to no club, who walks to and from his home, who blacks his own shoes and shaves his own chin, who reads only one newspaper a day, who saves his money and intends to buy a farm, is very hard to find. There is a great career in a dime museum for such a man.

No, the fact is that New York is an expensive city for a sociable man to inhabit. If he is married, he must subject himself to a course of self-restraint that will whiten his hair, while all the time he would rather be reddening his nose. It is not strange that there are so many bachelors in the metropolis. Even \$5000 a year go a short way in maintaining a family in a large city built on a small island. Rents are high, living dear, and the customs of society extravagant. Banishment to the suburbs awaits the bachelor of moderate means who takes to himself a wife.

Such, in brief, is the problem that presents itself to the young New Yorker. Shall he abandon his club, his cigars, his wine, his freedom, and devote himself to the attempt to make a pint of money fill a quart measure of household bills? But, woman, lovely woman, comes into the equation. And there you are! Under which flag, Bezonian?

## EDNA DORR.

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IF you can snare a doctor in a genial mood you are certain to capture a most entertaining companion. A physician sees many sides of life and gains a most valuable insight into human nature. A famous specialist in nervous diseases recently spent an evening with me. I asked him if he had ever come into contact with mental phenomena that science could not explain. He answered :

“ Yes, I had a very curious experience not long ago. I was on my way to Washington, and had made the acquaintance in the smoking compartment of two cultivated men whose conversation was extremely entertaining. The talk turned upon mind-reading and one of my companions proposed an experiment. I left the compartment and walked to the other end of the car. On my return

my friends informed me that they had chosen a woman's name and would will me to guess it. We took hold of hands and sat silent for a time. Gradually my mind became a blank. I could not concentrate my thoughts, and a nervous twitching affected my muscles. Pretty soon a name came into my head. I glanced at my companions. They were eyeing me attentively. As though influenced by an irresistible power I faltered out:

“‘Edna Dorr.’

“‘That's it,’ they cried in chorus. ‘That was the name we had selected.’

“On my return to New York I found the name of Edna Dorr constantly in my mind. I had never heard it before and did not know whether it was the name of a living being or simply the product of the experimenters' fancy. Whatever it was it haunted me. I really felt annoyed at my weakness. I began to fear that I had overworked and was in danger of nervous prostration.

“One night last week I was called to examine a critical case at a well-known hospital.

I found that the patient, a young woman, had been fatally shot in a low resort on the Bowery. She was dying when I reached her side. Her face bore the marks of refinement and beauty, but a life of dissipation had almost obliterated them. I bent toward her, for I saw that her end was at hand.

“ ‘What is your real name?’ I asked, knowing that in death she would tell the truth.

“ ‘Edna Dorr,’ she answered. In another moment she was dead.

“That is the whole case. Who she was, or how my traveling companions happened to select her name, I know not. Queer, wasn’t it?”

## THE PIRATE OF NEW ROCHELLE.

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NEW ROCHELLE, Westchester County, N. Y., is an interesting place from an historic standpoint. Tom Paine, the famous infidel, was so impressed with the town that he decided to die there. If you go to live in New Rochelle it is necessary to know about the death of Paine, on pain of death. It is also well to grasp the fact that the Huguenots settled the place and that politicians now run it. Speaking of the latter brings me to pirates—the old-fashioned kind who scuttled ships instead of looting treasuries.

The story I am about to tell was related to me one evening not long ago by a man upon whose shoulders the mantle of the famous boy who would not tell a lie has fallen. We were seated before a wood fire, smoking long

pipes and listening to the storm as it roared across the Sound and beat in fury against the house. It was just the night for a yarn possessing weird features. My friend thus began :

“ When I first entered college, in a small city of New England, I was especially impressed by the importance of the Sophomore Class, and the fact that an insane retreat was situated almost within a stone’s throw of our campus. For the first few weeks of my career as a Freshman the Sophomores were of more significance to me than the madmen. After getting used to the Sophomores, however, the ‘ crazes,’ as we called the inmates of the retreat, became, by a natural step, objects of great interest to me. I never passed the gloomy stone buildings late at night without carrying my penknife open in my hand. The muffled shrieks that haunted the dreary place thrilled me by their grim suggestiveness. What if an escaped madman should attack me in the dark ?

“ One afternoon I strolled into the grounds

which stretched in verdant glory for many acres in front of the asylum. It was a beautiful day in June, and the nervousness that affected me at midnight did not show itself under the influence of the summer sun. On such a day and in such a place insanity seemed as impossible as blizzards. As I wandered along, enjoying the scene before me, I noticed that a man was following me. 'He is one of the keepers,' I thought, and turned to ask him for a match with which to light a cigarette. I was at once struck by the beauty of my pursuer. He was tall and graceful, with a complexion as perfect as a woman's. His eyes were feverishly bright and the smile he gave me was peculiar. It displayed a set of perfect teeth, but was, to my mind, meaningless. He had removed his hat and the breeze played with his snow-white hair. His mustache was as black as his eyes and he looked as though old age had attacked him first at the top. When I asked him for a match his smile became a laugh and he threw himself upon the grass.

“‘Sit down,’ he cried. ‘I have no match, but I want to talk to you.’

“I did as he requested, though I kept my hand on my faithful penknife. I began to fear that I had encountered one of the patients, and that he might become dangerous at any moment.

“‘They say I am crazy,’ he began confidentially, ‘but they are wildly mistaken. Look at me, young man. Do I look mad?’

“I thought he did, but did not dare to be frank with him.

“‘Not at all, sir. You seem to be thoroughly sane.’

“‘Good. Of course I am. I’ll prove it. You are one of the boys at the college up there. You study the higher mathematics. Now, let me tell you that a line running at right angles to infinity will end at a spot where gold is buried. Do you follow me? Just think of it a moment. No crazy man could make such a discovery. If my mind was not perfectly sound I never could have grasped this great principle. I will go into

details with you concerning it. Suppose the captain of a ship should——’

“‘Ah, there you are,’ remarked a stern voice, and one of the attendants approached us. My crazy companion sprang up hastily, with a rather sheepish look on his handsome face.

“‘Good-day,’ he said politely, taking the arm of the keeper. ‘Put your mind on my proposition. It is certain to put gold into your purse. Remember, a line running at right angles to infinity will end where gold is buried.’

“Years passed, and I had forgotten all about this encounter with a madman. After I left college I studied law, and finally began the practice of my profession in New York City. Desiring a quiet home, I came to New Rochelle and purchased an old Huguenot house that had withstood the storms of a hundred and fifty years. An aged negro woman, who had lived in the family of the original owners for several generations, took care of me and acted as housekeeper, cook, and maid.

of-all-work. One day she told me the story of her former employers.

“‘Dey was French refugees, sah, who came from France befoh George Washington was born. Dey lived heah foh many yeahs. A great while ago dere was pirates in dese waters. One of dem fell in love with a Huguenot girl, a daughter of de fust owner of dis yere house. He took her away to sea and years afterward, when she was an old woman, she came back heah. She had her little boy with her and papahs to prove the place belonged to him. He took de family name. After she was dead he found in her strong-box a piece of parchment dat had on it de map of an island and some queer marks. He kept it for many yeahs and never showed it to his wife and children. When he was about fifty he began to go away from home and stay foh days at a time. After a while he went daft and dey took him to a mad-house. De wust of it was dat his oldest son got hold of dat wicked parchment.’

“‘What harm did that do, Aunty?’

“‘Why, he went crazy, too. Dere’ been one ob de family dat has gone crazy in ebery generation by gettin’ a hold o’ dat map wid de queer marks on it.’

“I was interested in her story and took pains to find out more about it. I discovered that everybody in the town knew the strange history of the D——s. They had been a prominent and wealthy family, but the effort of the eldest son in each generation to discover the hiding-place of their ancestral pirate’s gold had proved disastrous to their fortunes. The last of the race, under the fatal influence of the old parchment, had been in a madhouse for some years.

“One night when the wind was roaring across Davenport’s Neck and my old mansion was creaking and groaning as though it thought of the past and moaned in sorrow, I sat alone trying to put my mind on a knotty case of law. I had allowed my housekeeper to spend the night with some friends up the Sound, and the loneliness of my dreary home almost made me regret my bachelorhood.

Suddenly, to my amazement, I heard a sound as though a key had been placed in the lock of the front door. I rushed into the hall and was confronted by the handsome madman who had discovered the relation of a line running at right angles to infinity to buried treasure. I recognized him at once. He had grown perceptibly older since my college days, but his cheeks were still red and his mustache black. His eyes retained the wild look that had thrilled me when I lay on the grass at his side.

“‘Good-evening,’ he said courteously, placing his dripping hat on a chair. ‘You are the new owner of my ancestral home?’

“‘I am. I did not know that any one possessed a latch-key to the house. However, I am pleased to see you. Come into the library.’

“I spoke calmly, but my heart was in my throat. I realized that my unwelcome guest had escaped from the insane asylum and I dreaded an outbreak of madness on his part.

“‘Ha! they were never able to find my

key,' he remarked, seating himself in front of the grate fire. 'I knew I would need it some time and I have kept it with me for years.' He chuckled contentedly at his cleverness.

"'You see,' he went on, 'I expected to solve the great problem and might require another look at the parchment. Did you ever see it!' He glanced at me suspiciously.

"'No.'

"'Well, it's here, and the time has come for me to examine it again.'

He arose from his seat, went to a recess in the wall, opened a secret panel and brought to light a dust-covered roll, the cause of his family's downfall.

"'Here it is, see? Just look at this map a moment. You can't make anything out of those marks, can you?'

"He was intensely excited, and, to humor him, I gazed fixedly at the parchment he had spread upon the table.

"'The fact is that my ancestors made one great blunder in translating the cipher. I have spent years on the puzzle, and a week

ago got track of their mistake. Look here. Everybody has read the third line as follows: "Here is buried." The correct rendering is "Huckleberry." There's where they all got off the track. See? I thought it all out in solitude. Now that I have the parchment before me I know that I am right.'

"What could I say to him? I knew that he was crazy, but his manner was as earnest and well balanced as that of a sane man pointing out a great discovery to a friend.

"He rerolled the parchment and replaced it in its hiding-place. Then placing his hand familiarly on my shoulder he whispered:

"'I've got a boat waiting for us.'

"'What do you mean?'"

"Why, don't you understand me? I agree to take you in as my partner in this affair. My predecessors in this search thought that the gold was buried on Davenport's Neck. I have proved to you that Huckleberry Island is the place to look for it. The night is dark and windy, but my boat is not at all cranky.'

“‘I wish *you* weren’t.’ I muttered to myself. To put to sea in a rowboat with a madman on such a night as that was absurd. But how could I help it? He was much larger and stronger than I, and I feared every moment that by some word or look I would arouse his crazy rage. He gazed at me now and then with a suspicious gleam in his eyes that warned me to be careful.

“‘I will go with you,’ I said at length.

“He laughed wildly, seized my hand, and said that I was a worthy occupant of his family’s homestead. I began to think he spoke the truth, for I was not certain that my reason could withstand the ordeal before me.

“‘Excuse me a moment until I get my overcoat.’ Before he could follow me I was in the hall and had slipped a revolver into my pocket. I was none too quick, for in another instant he had placed an arm in mine and was hurrying me toward the door. The storm had abated somewhat, and the moon would now and then peep forth from behind

the scurrying scud. Water dripped from the trees, and as we crossed the road we sunk to our ankles in mud. As soon as we reached the shore I saw that he had made his arrangements with the craftiness of a madman. The boat was drawn up in the shelter of a rock and contained a spade and pick-ax. We put forth with some difficulty, for a heavy surf was beating against the shore. The crazy man took the oars and handled them with almost superhuman skill. I sat in the stern, and under his direction headed for Huckleberry Island. The sea was so rough that it was nearly an hour before we grounded on the western end of the island.

Taking the spade, the pick-ax, and a large bag from the boat, my companion hurried forward. He seemed to have no doubt as to his destination. It was evident that the map on the parchment was thoroughly impressed on his mind. The night had grown dark again and the moon had abandoned her efforts to pierce the clouds. I found it difficult to keep near the madman, and when I finally

overtook him, he was using the spade with feverish energy and had already dug quite a large hole in the pliant earth.

“‘Keep quiet,’ he said sternly. ‘This is the place.’ Then he went to work again with renewed vigor.

“I watched him for a long half-hour. He was hatless, and his gray hair formed a play-thing for the wind. After a time he threw off his coat and then his vest. As the hole grew deeper his excitement increased. He swore, most appropriately, like a pirate, and I clung to the pick-ax for comfort. At length his spade struck something and he bent down eagerly with an exclamation of triumph on his lips. Then to my horror he brought forth a skull. Hurling it from him with a curse he renewed his task. The skeleton of a man impeded his progress, and he cast the bones aside in a way that filled me with dread. He was growing madder every moment, and as he began to realize that there was nothing in the grave but the remains of his piratical ancestor his fury knew no bounds. Springing from

the hole, that was now waist-deep, he rushed at me, and before I could avoid him he had seized me by the neck.

“‘D—— you,’ he cried, ‘you have been here before and stolen the gold. You must die, you thief.’

“I was choking. There was murder in his eyes and I had to choose between my own death and his. Grasping my revolver, just as my struggle for breath had become desperate, I shot him through the breast. He fell at my feet, and as I leaned forward, still panting heavily, I heard him mutter: ‘A line running at right angles to infinity will end——’ Then he died.”

## A MAD NOVELIST.

---

THERE are those who hold that a novelist or poet is always more or less mad. Perhaps they are right. The creative imagination seems to be in a certain sense a fever of the brain. It is very probable that the cerebrum and cerebellum of Shakespeare were highly inflamed at times—even when he had not been to the tavern with “rare Ben Jonson.”

But it is not often that a writer of fiction is obliged to go to an asylum because his *metier* has made him mad. Such, however, was the sad fate of Sidney Orcott, whose stories you have doubtless read. He is a raving lunatic and cares not at all that his books are having a great sale. The way of it was this.

Orcott, as you know, was somewhat de-

voted to the realistic school, and became infatuated with the idea of writing a novel with a crazy man as the "hero." I met him at a club one night about a year ago and he outlined his project to me. His plot was brilliant, and it was evident that he had made a close study of insanity in all its phases.

I will never forget the picture he presented that evening. He was not in appearance a literary man, according to the vulgar ideal. He was dressed in the height of fashion and his linen was as white as a baby's thoughts. His fine-cut features—you have seen his picture—were enlivened by the fire of his genius. His black hair added to the effectiveness of his pale face. He was almost Byronic in beauty, but seemed unconscious of his looks. Men are as vain as women, but Sidney Orcott was more anxious to obtain fame in letters than to win it as a physical gem. He wished to scale the ladder of greatness rather by his pen than by his pictures. Perhaps this desire was the outcome of his incipient insanity.

I noticed, however, that his eyes possessed a peculiar luster new to them. When he talked about the hero of his story his face assumed an expression that filled me with nervous dread. "Surely," I thought, "Orcott will either produce a masterpiece or go mad." I was right.

A few evenings later I met a famous alienist at dinner. He talked about Orcott. "He's a queer chap," remarked my *vis-à-vis*. "He comes to my office and asks me all sorts of hard questions about insanity. He will sit for hours among my books reading about diseases of the mind. I wonder if he intends to become my rival in my own field."

The speaker smiled with conscious power.

I saw Orcott only once again before he was taken to a mad-house. The weird light in his eyes had become oppressively bright. He talked incessantly about his novel.

"You see," he said, "my hero was a quiet, steady-going business man, with no bad habits. After a time he and his family noticed that his memory had become weak. He went to

a physician and was told to quit work. He did so, but found to his dismay that even after a long rest he could not remember what he had said or done an hour before. Then he began to have hallucinations. He thought he had solved the problem of perpetual motion. His hands were never quiet. All day and all night he would keep rubbing them together, and finally he broke down altogether and they took him to an insane retreat. There he is to-day, rubbing his hands and illustrating his theory of perpetual motion."

Two things struck me while Orcott was speaking. In the first place he had evidently forgotten that he had told me all this about his hero a few evenings before; secondly, he had been rubbing his hands together from the time I entered, and continued to do so until I left him. "Really," I thought, "this is carrying realism to an extreme."

I thought no more about the matter until a few days later, when a friend said to me:

"Isn't it sad about poor Orcott?"

“What’s the matter with him,” I asked in dismay, for I have always been fond of Orcott.

“Do you mean to say that you haven’t heard? Why, Orcott has gone crazy. First he lost his memory, and now he thinks he has discovered perpetual motion. His difficulty is the result of overstudy—of a too conscientious devotion to his realistic ideas. They have taken him to an asylum.”

## A WIFE'S FATE.

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YOU have seen Orville Ranney. His white hair and youthful face are so striking that, unless you go through the world with your eyes shut, you must have asked his name. You remember the tall, sad-faced man who walks up Broadway every afternoon at four, and is sometimes seen at the opera. He has never courted notoriety, but his appearance is such that, in spite of himself, local fame has come to him. There are few who know his history. It is a sad one. He told me his story a few nights ago. Listen :

“I have always had a passion for old houses,” began Ranney, as we sat puffing our after-dinner cigars at an uptown club. “I was born in one of those ancient mansions that still defy the wintry winds that beat

across the eastern end of Long Island. It had been built by one of my ancestors in the seventeenth century, and the family had lived there for many generations. As a boy I spent much time in the timber-ribbed attic of my birthplace, overhauling relics of the past and building castles in the air. Heigho, I wish I could be a boy again! I have visited the Alhambra, and seen the Coliseum by moonlight, but the romance that surrounded my homestead in my early years I shall never find again.

“As I said, I have always retained my love for those antique structures in which men of old stalked about in knee-breeches and frills, living, loving, hating, dying, in those queer days before George Washington was born. It was that love that proved my ruin. The way of it was this :

“I was engaged to be married to one of the loveliest women New York has ever known. Here is her picture. A fairer face you cannot find. She was a perfect woman—delicate, high-bred, affectionate, proud. I

worshiped her, and when she promised to be my wife, my joy was infinite.

“One day, not long before our marriage, we were driving through Westchester County, a province rich in tradition and attractive to the eye. It was late in May, and I was anxious to find a house where we could spend the summer. We were to be married early in June. Suddenly I was struck by the charms of an ancient mansion that stood on a gentle hill overlooking Long Island Sound. It was a large house—old-fashioned, rambling, picturesque. White Corinthian pillars supported the piazza, and above the roof arose a peculiar conformation that indicated the Huguenot origin of the first owner. A great lawn, bedecked with stately trees, surrounded the old house, and a dilapidated lodge at the entrance of the place was mournfully going to ruin. A sign on the gate informed the public that the house and grounds were ‘For Sale or to Rent.’

“To make a long story short, I leased the house for the season. On our return from

our honeymoon, my wife was astonished and delighted at the change that had been wrought in the ancient Huguenot homestead. I had expended a large amount of money in placing the mansion and grounds in good order, and my workmen had well fulfilled their task.

“It was with pardonable pride that I led my bride into our future home. She was delighted with the outcome of the orders I had left. A neglected rookery had been turned into a modern palace. There was still about the mansion an air of faded grandeur that pleased our antiquarian tastes, but to this was added those contemporary luxuries that wealth, well directed, can procure. The house, nearly two centuries old, seemed to wear its new adornments with patrician dignity. The whole place appeared to rejoice, in its quiet way, over its restoration to respectability.

“Houses, especially those that have seen a great deal of life, acquire an individuality

that is almost human. My wife and I, well do I remember, talked of this strange fact during our first dinner in our new home. We referred to the peculiar fascination that this deserted homestead had exerted over us when we first saw it, and rejoiced that we had given in to it. For it was a very pleasant place. The view of the sound, through the windows of the dining-room was entrancing, and the incense of the growing summer added to our joy. Oh, my friend, how much there is in youth and hope and love. That evening was the culmination of my life. Though I lived a thousand years, I could never again taste the bliss that was mine during those sacred hours when, hand in hand, my wife and I watched the rising moon, as it kissed the waters of the Sound and threw about us fantastic shadows. For all eternity that evening will be to me the pinnacle of joy, the highest altitude of human happiness.

“And now for the dark side of the screen. It was late that night before we retired. I had

been asleep but an hour when I was aroused of a sudden by a cry that echoed from below : 'Help ! help !'

"I jumped from the bed in a fright. My wife was sitting upright, a look of terror on her face. 'Help ! help !' again the awful sounds echoed through the house. Seizing my revolver, I rushed downstairs. I felt sure that in the hallway I would find a tragedy in play. There was no one there. I ran to the parlor. It was vacant. The dining-room, too, was empty. There was one room left, the library. As I opened the door, again I heard that weird and thrilling cry : 'Help ! help !' To my horror, this time the voice was my wife's. Rushing upstairs, I fainted at the sight before me.

"When I came to my senses an hour later, the light in our night lamp was burning dimly. The wind had arisen, and on the shore behind the house the waters broke with an insistent sound. I arose feebly and approached the bed. My wife lay dead ;

upon her throat were the marks of murderous hands. I staggered to a mirror. My hair had turned white. And now in the silent watches of the night, I hear that ghastly cry: 'Help! help!' I have not slept for many weeks. What the end will be I know not, but *I think I am going mad!*"

## AN ANARCHIST BY FATE.

---

**D**ID you ever hear how Timothy Troop happened to become an anarchist? It was the outcome of a slow process begun in his boyhood. Timothy was an indefatigable reader, and was always under the influence of the last author he had perused. During several years of his life he imagined himself a knight-errant, and copied, so far as he could, the heroes of Walter Scott and G. P. R. James. His mother to her dying day never forgot the time when "Tim" was nearly suffocated by drawing a tin can over his head. He had cut eye-holes therein, but they were not in the right place, and when his mother found him he was writhing on the kitchen floor for want of air. He explained that he and his playmates were to hold a tourney that day and that he was "to break a lance"

with Jack Johnson. The lance was never broken, but his mother's slipper received considerable injury in a one-sided duel, later in the afternoon—after Timothy had recovered his breath.

This tendency to carry into practice what he read in fiction increased as young Troop approached manhood. He became by turns a lover, a cynic, a miser, a spendthrift, a devoted church-goer, an atheist, and various other things of strongly contrasted character.

One day he read the following lines :

The man who hath no music in his soul,  
And is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils,

He was startled. That he had "no ear for music" he had often been told. He realized that he was utterly insensible to the entrancing strains of a brass band, and had never thrilled when the harmonious hurdy-gurdy echoed through the street. Even the piano-playing of his sister gave him no pleasure, and he had even thought of murdering a cor-

net manipulator who occupied the adjoining house. These facts worried him. Could it be possible that he, Timothy Troop, was fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils? His sensitive soul collapsed in horror at the thought.

Timothy, as we have seen, was a man of action. No sooner had the fear arisen in his mind that nature had made him piratical and lawless than he set out to establish the exact status of his make-up. He went first to the leader of the church choir.

“Will you kindly test my voice?” asked Timothy.

“Certainly,” was the answer, “please sound that note.”

Timothy attempted to place his vocal organ on terms of intimacy with the reverberating sound. The result was a dismal discord. Again and again the good-natured musician tried to induce our hero to avoid flats and sharps and strike a note squarely in the center. It soon became evident that Timothy would die with all his music in

him. There was no way of getting any out of him.

This was discouraging. If he could not sing, could he still be moved by concord of sweet sounds? This was the problem now before him. He asked the musician to play a symphony on the organ. As the inspiring chords echoed through the church Timothy kept a finger on his pulse. His heart did not seem to beat one stroke faster under the influence of the palpitating harmony. He turned pale, hastily thanked the musician, and rushed from the church. The awful thought was upon him that he felt no more emotion under the genius of Beethoven than when listening to the tinpanism of his sister's finger exercises. He had no music in his soul.

One hope remained to him. He would go to New York and listen to a grand opera. If he failed to vibrate when Wagner twanged the strings he would devote his life to treasons, stratagems, and spoils. He was not quite certain what these things were, but

surely somebody in the metropolis could tell him. He was convinced that it is always best for a man to discover what nature has fitted him for, and then to give up his whole time to the development of his special talents.

He went, he heard, he fell. At the end of the first act of "Tristan and Isolde" he rushed from the opera-house, convinced that his poor soul had in it no more music than a squash. For a few moments he gave way to despair. Then his manhood asserted itself, and he determined to begin his career in the line pointed out by fate.

"Where can I find some treasons, stratagems, and spoils?" he asked timidly of a policeman.

The officer gazed at Timothy for a moment in surprise. Then muttering: "He is either drunk or crazy," he dragged our hero to the nearest station.

"What is your name?" asked the sergeant.

"Timothy Troop."

"What is the matter with you?"

"I have no music in my soul."

The sergeant smiled grimly. "Most of 'em have when they get such a jag as yours," he remarked.

Timothy spent the night in a cell. The next morning he was discharged with a warning to abstain from strong drink.

Timothy Troop was not a man to be easily discouraged. He had received a sharp lesson and had profited thereby. He determined to be more cautious in the future.

After his release he purchased a morning newspaper and strolled along Forty-second Street. Presently he espied a park, and, passing through the gateway, seated himself on a vacant bench. Then he began a perusal of the news. Presently his eye was attracted by an editorial relating to the latest development of anarchy in the metropolis.

As he read on his face flushed with pleasure and a smile shone on his fascinating mouth.

"Anarchy," said the editorial, "is in its very essence treason. The stratagems employed by the lawless men who gather nightly

at Dynamite Hall are not for the purpose of elevating humanity, but that they may in time gather to themselves the spoils of an overturned universe."

That evening Timothy Troop was among the throng at Dynamite Hall. He is now one of the most popular speakers among those who have no music in their souls.

## A PUGILISTIC ENCOUNTER.

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ON the 1st of January, 1891, Albert T. Jones, attorney and counselor-at-law, "swore off." He took this heroic step because of various circumstances. Some months before he had noticed that his barber always put a little powder on his nose after he had shaved him. This innovation worried Mr. Jones. He laid awake o' nights wondering if his nose was really growing red. At early dawn he would rush to his mirror to find his worst fears confirmed. His room was cold. Of course his nose was red.

Now Mr. Jones was not a hard drinker. Perhaps he imbibed three cocktails a day and a bottle of wine. Nevertheless, he realized that he was losing his memory. He forgot to pay a bill now and then, and discov-

ered that he had lost all recollection of the first year of his babyhood. Being a brilliant man intellectually, he was alarmed by these phenomena. He began to fear that alcohol was destroying the delicate tissues of his brain.

Thus it was that Mr. Jones determined to quit drinking "hardware" on the first of the year. He had a very jolly time the night before New Year's. By twelve o'clock he was the liveliest spirit at his club, and his friends remarked that it would be a shame for Jones to "swear off." He was "a glorious fellow in his cups." Deaf to flattery, however, our hero refused to touch another drop when the last stroke of midnight had ushered in the new year. He returned to his bachelor's apartments in an exalted frame of mind.

A new and better life was before him. In a few days his barber would find it unnecessary to put powder on his nose, and perhaps the face of his wet-nurse would again issue from some neglected closet of his brain.

Cherishing such happy thoughts he sunk into a profound slumber.

When he awoke in the morning Jones felt thirsty. He swallowed a glassful of ice water but it did not relieve his desire. His hands shook slightly and a chilly sensation affected his limbs as he drew on his clothes. The awful conviction stole over him that the only thing on earth that he really longed for was a cocktail. He turned pale at the thought. After over-indulgence at his club he had always found that a "Manhattan" restored the equilibrium of his nervous system. This morning he realized that his "jag" of the night before had been of unusually large proportions.

He had never, in the course of a life of two-score years, been called upon to pit the force of will against the force of habit. Time had been called, however, and the first round was now under way. Habit got in the first blow and stunned Will for a moment. Jones walked toward the cabinet containing the ingredients for the desired

cocktail. Will countered Habit, however, and Jones paused. The set-to then became lively. Habit forced the fighting and Jones unlocked the cabinet. Will, driven to the ropes, returned the blow, and Jones turned the key in the lock. He slowly walked toward a chair and seated himself therein. The first round was at an end and Will had scored first blood.

Habit was by no means downed, however. When the fight began again Will was knocked senseless and Jones arose from his chair, rapidly crossed the room, and again unlocked the private bar. The row of bottles before him seemed to send up a roar of applause for Habit. Roused by the sound, Will jumped forward and struck Habit a rather ineffective blow, and Jones slowly reclosed the door of the cabinet but did not lock it. Thus ended the second round, with the betting slightly in favor of Habit.

Jones stood still for a while, looking vacantly out of the window. The excitement of the

combat had stunned him for a moment. Then the third round began. Habit got in some very pretty body blows, and Jones took from the cabinet a glass and several bottles. Habit followed up this advantage and broke Will's collar-bone. Jones began to mix his cocktail. The third round ended with Habit somewhat winded, but smiling triumphantly. Will was suffering much pain but still had a plucky look on his face.

When the fourth round began, a sweet-smelling cocktail trembled in our hero's hand. Habit was off his guard for a moment and Will made a final rally, striking a strong blow in spite of his broken clavicle. Jones set the cocktail down and stood gazing at it longingly. Then Habit got in some tremendous work, and Jones took a sip of his concoction. It was delicious. Thus ended the fourth round, with Will paralyzed and Habit in the ascendant.

The fight was not over, however. Jones paused in dismay and replaced the cocktail

on the table. He was astonished at Habit's prowess. He had heard of that pugilist's skill, but had never witnessed it before.

When the fifth round began, Will did some very clever work and held Habit off for a time, but finally the latter got in a telling stroke and Jones swallowed half the cocktail. Will was enraged and made a last desperate effort to snatch victory from defeat. He was partially successful. Jones poured the remainder of the decoction into a cuspidor.

The fight was at an end. As referee, Jones declared it a draw. Do you think it was?

## A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

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THE conscience, that still small voice, has always been of more interest to metaphysicians than to surgeons. Its existence was recognized by the earliest philosophers, but even the most advanced materialists of modern times have not attempted to locate its habitation in the human organism. That it is a part of man's make-up has, in fact, been a stumbling-block to the iconoclastic scientists of our day. Between materialism and accepted truth the conscience stood alone as a barrier.

Now, however, this obstacle has been removed and the materialist stands, for the moment, triumphant. He has discovered that the conscience, like the memory, is sim-

ply a combination of tissues. No greater victory was ever won by the surgeon's knife. The way of it was this :

A noted manipulator of the scalpel began years ago to make a close study of the vermiform appendage, that seemingly useless portion of our anatomy known as the "blind intestine." Here was a sac that seemed ordained by nature for nothing but destruction. If, in the course of the digestive process, a seed or other hard substance left the beaten track and dropped into the "blind intestine," the victim of such a mishap was doomed to death. Neither medicine nor surgery could save him. Science asserted that this fatal sac was wholly useless and simply a menace to human life. Our "hero," a surgeon whose name is world-renowned, determined to solve this ancient mystery. He devoted years to the task, and finally invented a method whereby the unlucky wight who had dared the inflammatory wrath of the blind intestine might be saved. His process consisted in the skillful manipulation of the knife and the excision of the of-

fending sac. Many an unhappy sufferer owes his life to this brilliant triumph of surgical ingenuity.

After a time, the surgeon who had achieved this great victory became impressed by a certain suggestive fact. He had made a practice of following his patients in their respective careers after they had recovered from the effects of his nimble knife. To his surprise he found that the removal of the vermiform appendage had a marked influence upon the moral nature of the man who had undergone the operation. After repeated experiments he came to the conclusion that the seat of the conscience lay in the blind sac.

Such a startling deduction was, of course, not to be accepted without convincing proof. Our surgeon, therefore, confided his theory to several colleagues, and together they made a close study of the phenomena presented. One of their first steps was to cut open the body of a murderer, a man who had displayed in his life and death a remarkable lack of conscience. To their astonishment they found

that the intestines were wholly devoid of a vermiform appendage.

Of course, they reasoned, this may have been a coincidence. Our surgeon smiled, and assured them that his theory was correct. Some weeks later the committee cut open the body of a man who had lost his life through an utter indifference to the distinctions between right and wrong. Again the surgeons failed to find the blind sac.

There was enough in all this to arouse the curiosity of those who had taken part in the autopsies. One of them, a practitioner who was noted for his conscientiousness, agreed to have his vermiform appendage removed, in order to prove conclusively the truth or falsity of the proposition under discussion. He endured the operation with heroic calmness, and made a quick recovery. A few weeks later he murdered his mother-in-law in cold blood.

There is no longer a shadow of doubt that the seat of the conscience is in the vermiform appendage.

## OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES.

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“PAPA, we’re doin’ to have a bid turkey pretty soon.”

Ned Barker looked down into the smiling eyes of his little girl, brushed the curls away from her forehead, and kissed the red lips, held so temptingly near to his own.

“Who told you all that?” he asked. “I haven’t seen any turkey about the house for a long time.”

“Dat doesn’t make any dif-dif-difference,” she faltered poutingly. Like all children who have lived almost entirely with grown people, she was fond of using long words, and rushed on them often with an impetuosity which threw her tongue into a serious state of uncontrol.

“Mamma knows more than you do any

way"; and she slipped off her father's lap in the evident conviction that she had ended the discussion with a crushing argument. At this moment the mother, possessed of such remarkable wisdom in the mind of the child, entered the room. Her bright, handsome face indicated that she was worthy of the little girl's admiration.

"Daisy tells me," said Barker to his wife, "that we are on the verge of eating a turkey. What do you suppose she means?"

Mrs. Barker laughed and patted her daughter on the cheek. "Daisy and I know all about it," she answered. "But we have decided not to tell. But, seriously, Ned, I want to say something to you about Thanksgiving. Don't you think it would be a good plan to ask Kate and her husband to dinner? They will, of course, have a number of 'invites' a great deal 'sweller' than ours, but I think they would rather dine here than anywhere else."

"Oh, yes, papa, let's have Aunt Taty. She likes turkey awful."

Ned Barker looked annoyed. He was

very fond of his wife's sister, and liked her husband, but they were wealthy people, given up to the luxuries of social life, and used to dinners much more elaborate than any the unpretentious Barkers ever indulged in. Just at that time Ned Barker was in that unsatisfactory financial shape which is commonly designated by the expressive word, "short." He knew that a dinner appropriate to the guests his wife proposed would more than demoralize a twenty-dollar bill, and the rapid approach of rent day warned him that he who lives in a flat must pay the owner. It is very hard to have to fight one's inclinations toward hospitality for the sake of a few paltry dollars. But if the love of money is the root of all evil, the lack of gold is the cause of much apparent hard-heartedness.

"My dear little woman," said Barker, rising and putting his arm about his wife. "I should like very much to have Kate with us, but don't you think we had better dine quietly, and on Christmas day we'll——" Whether his wife understood his motive or

not, she interrupted him with a few quiet words of acquiescence, and the matter was dropped. But little Daisy did not forget.

“Come, kiss me good-by,” said Barker to her, as he put on his hat and coat to go to business.

“I want Aunt Tate to eat turkey with me,” cried the persistent child. “You is not gen-gen-gingerous.” This was too much for Barker, and he laughed outright. Catching the little girl in his arms, he kissed her on both cheeks and left her abruptly.

He had a happy little home, this bright-faced young man, but as he hurried along toward the elevated station his heart was far from light. In this materialistic age money has a good deal to do with individual happiness. It is a favorite assertion of sentimental moralists that wealth does not bring contentment. This is true, as far as it goes, but the implication that only the poor are happy is an absurdity these same romantic philosophers frequently propound.

Ned Barker was neither rich nor poor, but

his slender salary was far from satisfying the demands of a rather extravagant nature. He labored under a great disadvantage from the fact that he had been brought up in luxury, and had had in his youth dangerous promises which are summed up in the one word "expectations." He had been the ward of a most indulgent but self-willed uncle, whose vast fortune young Barker would have inherited some day had he not possessed an obstinacy equal to his guardian's. The young man had married for love, in opposition to his uncle's express desires. The old gentleman had never forgiven the youth for his independence, and since the marriage there had been no intercourse between them. Barker had never regretted the choice he had made, but once in a while the stern realities of life, as expressed in unreceipted bills, forced themselves upon him with a bitter energy. This morning he could not but feel depressed at his inability to do as his wife and child had requested.

"Bah," he said to himself, "to think that

the lack of a small piece of paper bearing the government stamp should change the whole aspect of life. That dear little girl wants her Aunt Kate to dine with us, and because I can't give Aunt Kate champagne Daisy thinks I am not gingerous." And he smiled at his daughter's unique expression.

Meanwhile Daisy and her mother had started out to do some shopping. A woman is generally in a chronic state of shopping if she lives in a large city. A noted Frenchman said there was one thing we could not resist, and that was "temptation." There is one thing a woman cannot resist, and that is a bargain. Let a woman know that she can purchase anything at a desirable price and she will surely buy it, whether she needs it or not. And the worst feature of it all lies in the fact that she generally has the bill sent to her husband. Mrs. Barker was not an extravagant woman, but, like all her sex, she did enjoy frequent visits to the stores, and even little Daisy was beginning to develop that hereditary trait.

As Mrs. Barker stood at a counter in one of the large uptown bazaars, Daisy gradually wandered away from her and lost herself in the crowd. No one noticed the bright-eyed little creature, and she walked along at her own sweet will. The brilliant colors of the wares displayed on the counters amused her for a while, but pretty soon, with the fickleness of her sex, she turned her attention to a woolly little poodle just in front of her, which strutted along in all the glory of a blue ribbon and a snow-white coat. There is no creature in the great metropolis which fares better than a pet poodle. To be the favorite dog of a wealthy woman is to live in luxury of the most pronounced type. Daisy liked little dogs, and wanted to pat the white wool of the poodle just beyond her. But her two little legs could not overtake the object of her activity. The dog trotted on by its mistress and passed through the great door into the street. Daisy followed. The man at the entrance noticed the little girl go out, but thought that in this case, as in

others, the lady in front took more care of her poodle than of her child. Down the street went the careless baby. Pretty soon Daisy lost sight of her *ignis fatuus*. The dog and its mistress had disappeared.

“I’d better do and find mamma,” said the little girl to herself; and she turned around to retrace her steps. A large entrance at one side of the street attracted her attention, and, thinking it was the door of the store she had just left, she walked boldly in. It didn’t seem to her to be the right place, and she looked about her in a dazed way. Above what seemed to be glass cases she could see the tops of men’s heads, just showing over the woodwork. Down at the end of the room was an open door, and Daisy decided to go there and ask some one where her mamma was. She was beginning to be frightened, but had not lost all her courage. She boldly entered the little room and found there an old gentleman in spectacles, who looked over the top of his morning paper in astonishment at the interruption.

“You’s a funny looking old man,” said Daisy, with more emphasis than politeness.

“Well, little girl, what do you want here?” asked the old gentleman, in much the same tone that Pooh Bah, in the Mikado, says: “How de do, little girls; how de do?”

“I want to see the animals,” said Daisy, forgetting in her curiosity all about her mother. She had taken the glass counters and barred windows of the bank for an improved style of menagerie. The dignified president laid down his newspaper, arose from his chair, and looked into the reception room. He supposed that some mother had come to the bank on business and had carelessly allowed the little girl to wander away from her. But the bank was absolutely empty outside the railings.

“I want to see the animals,” said Daisy again, with much of her father’s obstinacy.

“My dear little girl,” said the old gentleman, looking puzzled, “where is your mamma?”

Daisy instantly came to her senses.

“Mamma’s in the store,” she said shortly.

“What store?” asked the president.

“The store where the little dod was,” replied Daisy irrelevantly.

The old gentleman looked at her sharply over his spectacles, and then the severe lines of his face relaxed, and he could not but smile on the bright little countenance turned up to his.

Calling one of the clerks, he asked if he knew anything about the child’s entrance. No one in the bank could account for it. The president was unusually moved. He would have stood the loss of half his fortune without showing the least emotion, but there was something about the little girl that affected him strangely. He pondered for a few moments, while the tears came into Daisy’s eyes. She had begun to lose her courage somewhat, and she was anxious to find her mamma. She knew that she had done wrong, and the thought that her mother must by this time be worried about her began to trouble her sorely. “I want to go to

mamma," she sobbed. Meanwhile the president had come to a curious decision. He might have intrusted the little wanderer to a clerk and have resumed his paper with serenity. But he was interested in Daisy without knowing why, and he determined to take her himself to her mother. "Wait a moment," he said to her kindly, "and you shall go to mamma with me." Daisy dried her eyes and felt relieved. She did not realize that it was a remarkable triumph thus to lure the president of a great bank from his morning's duties, but she was glad that the old gentleman was going with her. She began to be sorry for calling him a "funny looking old man," and tried to smooth matters over somewhat by taking his hand, and saying, "You're a nice old man, any way." Find me the woman, whether child or grandam, who is not by nature a coquette, and I'll tell you what grows on the other side of the moon.

Putting on his hat and coat the eccentric old man took the little girl's hand, and the strangely assorted couple passed through the

outer room toward the door. The cashier smiled to himself, the receiving teller whispered to a clerk, and the whole establishment paused for a moment to gossip about an event unprecedented in the history of the bank. The president was considered by those beneath him a haughty and unbending person. That he should so far depart from his accustomed habits as to wander forth with a stray child was most astonishing to those acquainted with his reserved and unsympathetic manners.

While all this was taking place Mrs. Barker had been making a most active search for Daisy. She had missed her soon after the wanderer had left the store, and had asked nearly every one in the establishment if they had seen the child. Up and down the street she walked hurriedly, looking here and there, questioning policemen and endeavoring all the time to keep as calm as possible. The fear that her daughter had been kidnaped was coming on her, and her face grew pale as her fruitless search continued. She had left her

address at the store that they might send Daisy home if she should by any chance return. But what had been her first fear rapidly reached conviction, and she felt sure that the child had been stolen. She was a cool, courageous woman, but the awful thought that her little daughter might now be in hands unkind and treacherous filled her with dismay.

She hurried home as rapidly as possible. Her husband must know at once of Daisy's disappearance. At a crisis like that which now confronted Mrs. Barker, a woman feels all the significance of her own weakness. She naturally turns to a man for guidance. Mrs. Barker felt an intense relief when she heard her husband's voice answering her through the telephone. It was not a pleasant story she had to tell, but she related hurriedly the main features thereof in as quiet and restrained a manner as possible. Ned Barker was a man who always reached a decision in a hurry, but his judgment was seldom at fault. "I will go to the store and

from there to the police station. After that I will come home at once," he called to his wife. "Don't worry about her; she will turn up all right."

In spite of his cheerful words, however, his voice had an unwonted unsteadiness about it which was not wholly the telephone's fault. Mrs. Barker did worry. How could she help it? Her own unwarranted absorption in a petty bargain had caused her a loss which, if permanent, she felt would drive her crazy.

And where were little Daisy and her conquest meanwhile? On leaving the bank the president had easily led the little girl to show him in what store she had left her mother. It was all plain sailing after that.

Mrs. Barker, as before said, had left her address with the clerks, and Daisy's dignified protector had no difficulty in learning where to take his little charge. "We live in a flat," said Daisy, as she trotted along at the great man's side. "We's goin' to have a turkey on Thanks—Thanks-giving day. We isn't doin' to have Aunt Tate, but I know

papa would like to have you come." The old gentleman looked down thoughtfully at the baby by his side.

"What is your papa's first name?" he asked, somewhat sternly. He had been struck by the name of Barker given him at the store, and something in the little girl's face seemed familiar.

"Papa hasn't any name, but just papa," said Daisy emphatically. "Mamma calls him Ned, but dat's only just for fun."

His suspicions were confirmed by the child's answer. He was doing a kindness to a man who for years he had resolved to efface from his memory. But his lonely old heart was touched, and he resolved to see the adventure to its end. His life had been very dreary since he had cast Ned Barker from him, and he felt a growing curiosity to see the woman who had come between him and his nephew. There was a pleasing excitement about the whole affair which gave him an interest in life which he had not hoped ever to feel again.

As he entered the elevator of the great apartment house, the little girl climbed into his lap and put up her face for a kiss. "You's a nice old man, any way," she repeated, patting him on his withered cheek. As he touched the bell at Ned Barker's door he heard the sound of sobs within. The door was opened instantly, and Daisy was in her mother's arms. The little girl had forgotten long ago that she had done wrong, but now her conscience began to prick again at sight of her mother's tears. "But, mamma," she said, "it was such a pretty little dod, and I lost him, and then I wanted to see the an—an—animals, and I didn't, but I saw a nice old man, and—and—and——"

Daisy's eloquence came to a most unsatisfactory end. Her reference to her protector roused her mother to a sense of propriety. "You must excuse me, sir, for delaying my welcome," she said smiling, "but I have been so worried that I fear I am not quite myself." And she held out to him her pretty white hand. In spite of the poets, women seldom

look well "when bathed in tears," as the expression goes, but Mrs. Barker's beauty appealed to the old gentleman with a force he could not resist. He followed her into the parlor, and sat down in a chair she placed for him.

As they sat there conversing about the details of Daisy's escapade, a quick step in the hallway preceded the entrance of Ned Barker. He had learned at the store that his little girl had been taken home, and his face was wreathed with smiles as he caught Daisy in his arms and kissed her on both cheeks.

"See dat nice old man," exclaimed Daisy, pointing to her rescuer. "He brought me home to mamma." Ned Barker turned quickly and beheld his uncle. It was a moment of intense emotion for both of them, but the sweet presence of the little child destroyed forever the coldness that had grown between them, and hand in hand they renewed the ties that had been severed. "The little girl looked so like you, Ned," said the uncle at last, "that I seemed to be drawn

to her by the force of former years. And you have completed the conquest," he said, turning to Mrs. Barker.

Thus it was that the Barkers had Aunt Kate and her husband to eat turkey with them, and the feast was dignified by the portly presence of a bank president. And if you ask Ned Barker now why he is not as "short" as he used to be, he will tell you that it is all owing to the fact that Daisy once got lost.

## A STRANGE CONFESSOR.

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### I.

A GREAT mystery surrounded the sudden death of Alexander Dale. Certain metropolitan newspapers claimed that he had committed suicide, while others contended that a murder had been perpetrated. The detectives were all at sea in the matter and refused to express an opinion.

So far as the public knew, the facts of the case were these: Alexander Dale, president of the Western Land Improvement Company, with offices in the Hollis Building, New York City, had been for years a prominent and respectable business man of the metropolis. He had been a member of several exclusive clubs, and had kept bachelor's hall in handsome style. One morning he was found dead in bed, a dagger through his

heart. The weapon was so situated that two theories regarding his demise were tenable. Either his own hand or that of a murderer had struck the fatal blow.

The weakness of the position held by those who considered him a suicide lay in the fact that no motive for self-destruction seemed to exist. His financial affairs appeared to be in a flourishing condition, and no complications with the gentler sex were known to cloud his record. His fellow-clubmen testified unanimously that he had been a consistent woman-hater; that he was not prone to melancholia, and that, on the night preceding his death, he had left their company in unusually high spirits.

On the other hand, there was not the slightest clue to a murderer. His apartments were on the second floor of a large building on Fifth Avenue, and he was in the habit of remaining out so late at night that his incomings were never noted by the janitor, who usually retired long before Dale left his club.

The mystery caused much gossip and discussion for a few days, and was then practically forgotten. Some new sensation had turned the attention of the metropolis away from the Dale case.

## II.

THERE was only one man in the world who knew how Alexander Dale died; that was the murderer. Eugene Scranton, secretary and treasurer of the Western Land Improvement Company, had killed the president. Why? Because Dale and Scranton were scoundrels of a strictly modern type. They both knew that the W. L. I. C. was a gigantic fraud. No one else did. So Scranton murdered Dale in order that he might alone reap the profits of a great swindle and retain in his own keeping a dangerous secret. Greed and fear were the monsters that urged him to commit the worst of all crimes.

## III.

EUGENE SCRANTON sat at his breakfast table, sipping his coffee and glancing over

the morning newspapers. He was a tall, spare man, about forty years of age. His gray hair and black mustache formed a combination pleasing to the eye. To the close observer, however, there was something about the man's face that chilled the heart and awakened suspicion. Was it in the mouth or in the eyes that this father of distrust was born? It was hard to tell. Nevertheless, his was a bad face, though a handsome one.

Alexander Dale had been dead a month. Eugene Scranton smiled as he realized that the newspapers made no reference to the mystery that had caused such a furor some weeks before. He laid down the *Morning Wasp* and applied himself with considerable enthusiasm to an omelette spiced with chopped ham. He had been made president of the Western Land Improvement Company and had placed the affairs of that organization in such shape that he would reap most of the profits and stand in no peril from any man's knowledge that he was a high-toned "crook."

The study of this man's life had been to make selfishness a science. He perceived that the modern world pays adulation to him who holds the golden keys of power. Cold, remorseless as an iceberg, he had aimed at the target of wealth. He had found that between him and the bull's-eye of his ambition stood the form of Alexander Dale. A well-directed dagger had removed this obstacle—and Eugene Scranton found himself a millionaire.

## IV.

“WELL, what do you want?”

Scranton threw down his newspaper testily and turned toward his valet, who had just entered the breakfast-room.

“Beg pardon, sir,” said John, “but a man is outside with a queer-looking machine. He says you ordered a funnygraph sent here. I don't know what it is, but he's very positive, sir.”

“Tell him to put it in the drawing-room,” commanded the master. “Place it near the piano, do you hear?”

“Yes, sir.”

The valet left the room, and Eugene Scranton reapplied himself to his breakfast, his newspaper, and his self-gratulations.

v.

It was midnight, and Eugene Scranton lay awake, tossing restlessly upon his bed. The world was treating him well, but his conscience, that most obnoxious organ of the human make-up, had become so aggressive that sleep had deserted his fevered couch.

In the silent, dark, mysterious hours of night it makes little difference to a man what his fellow-creatures may think of him. At that solemn time what he thinks of himself is all that is essential. Eugene Scranton knew that he was a murderer. In the bustle and excitement of the day this self-conviction was not powerful nor poignant. In the silent watches of the night, however, it became unbearable. From the shadows of his room one face gazed at him—the face of Alexander Dale! He arose, dipped a handkerchief in ice

water, and placed the refreshing cloth against the base of the brain. For a few moments he appeared to doze. The blood that surged upward was cooled for a time, and a simple device seemed about to triumph over the insomnia that had driven him well-nigh mad.

It is not easy, however, to escape the punishment that follows sin. Eugene Scranton did not fall asleep. The blissful unconsciousness that his crime-tortured nature craved wooed him for a while. He was further from sleep than before; and again his staring eyes saw in the darkness the face of Alexander Dale.

## VI.

AN hour had passed; an hour of agony to Scranton. Twice had he pressed his revolver against his throbbing temples. Twice had he realized that he dared not rush to a fate that frightened Hamlet and made Cato pause. A man who commits murder from greed seldom commits suicide from choice.

At last the strain became unbearable.

Scranton sprang from his bed and rushed to the window.

“O God, I must confess my crime. I must confess. I must confess.”

He threw up the sash. A belated citizen was hurrying homeward on the opposite side of the street. “I’ll call to him and tell him the awful secret of my soul,” thought Scranton.

“Wait!”

The cry startled the silent street and echoed weirdly through the dismal night. Alarmed by his voice, Scranton shut the window with a crash and rushed into the outer room. In the dim light he saw before him the outlines of his phonograph. Hysterically he threw his arms around the machine and kissed it.

“I’m saved,” he whispered. “I’ll tell you the history of my fall.”

## VII.

NIGHT after night the fatal cylinder gave comfort to Eugene Scranton. If the mur-

derer awoke in the still, dark hours and the shadow of his crime crossed his soul, he would stealthily leave his bedroom and place in effective position the ear-pieces of the accusing machine. Then with ghastly satisfaction he would listen to the following repetition of the tale he had told the sympathetic wax :

“I killed Alexander Dale. I had hated him for years. Together we had concocted a scheme whereby we could fleece investors who desired to gain a fortune in the twinkling of an eye. It was my brain that developed the idea of a Western land improvement company, that would not be Western ; would own no land ; would have nothing to do with improvement, and would be a company only in name. I needed a well-known man to give his influence and reputation to the swindle, and I found in Dale a colleague who was weak enough to follow my guidance, but clever enough to retain in his grip a thorough control over my life. After months of temptation I yielded

to the voice of the devil, and determined to rid myself of the only man in the world who stood between me and success and safety. I killed him cleverly. He had had the utmost confidence in my loyalty, and when, one evening, after dining with him at his rooms, he expressed a wish to take me to one of his clubs, I pleaded fatigue, asked permission to finish my cigar in his drawing-room, and saw him sally forth a doomed man.

“The rest was easy. For hours I awaited his return. When I heard his footsteps on the stairs I concealed myself behind a portière. After he had undressed, and had fallen into a deep sleep, I plunged a dagger into his heart. Oh, it was delicious. I have enjoyed all the sensations that tempt the wealthy epicure. There is only one that fills the soul with perfect ecstasy—that is the bliss that pertains to murder.”

Here the cylinder made an incoherent sound and the confession ceased.

## VIII.

EUGENE SCRANTON'S valet John was not a genius, but he possessed a good deal of shrewdness and a fair amount of common-sense. From the moment of its arrival he had been intensely interested in what he called "the funnygraph." When his master was away he spent much of his time in trying to make the machine work. At first the results were not satisfactory; but after a week of mental effort he solved the problem involved, and thereafter enjoyed himself greatly.

Scranton was constantly buying new cylinders; some with operatic music, others with banjo solos or recitations by famous actors. The much-used cylinder containing his confession he kept carefully locked in a drawer by itself, and placed it on the machine only at the dead of night. One night, after quieting his conscience by listening to the ghastly story of his crime, he failed to lock the compartment reserved for the accusing wax. It

was a fatal omission; murder will out unless you always turn the key.

## IX.

THE next afternoon, John, the valet, experienced the most frightful sensation of his life. He listened, awe-struck, to his master's voice, as it related the story of a great crime. Then, like the shrewd man he was, he sat down and debated with himself the best method of turning this weird find to his own advantage. At first he was inclined to inform Scranton that he had discovered his secret. John realized that his silence was worth a great deal of money, and he knew that Scranton could afford to pay well to escape the gallows.

But the valet was at heart a coward. He had long stood in awe of his master; and, he reflected, a man who murders one unfortunate who holds his secret would not hesitate to sacrifice a second victim. So John abandoned the idea of blackmail.

## X.

IN connection with his phonographic amusements, the valet had discovered that handsome prices were paid by a "nickel-in-the-slot" company for novel cylinders. After an hour of meditation John decided to take Eugene Scranton's confession to this concern, demand a high price for it, and then leave the city at once.

Arriving at the office of the phonographic company, he astonished the manager by these words :

"You remember the sensational death of Alexander Dale some months ago? Well, the man was murdered. This cylinder here holds the confession of the man who killed him—my master. Now, you will take this cylinder to the police and they will arrest the murderer. On the instant the city will ring with the news. Meanwhile you have reproduced the cylinder a thousand times, and your public machines contain the most sensational attraction ever offered to the victims of the phono-

graphic habit. See? My price is one thousand dollars. Is it a bargain?"

"Yes," said the manager, writing out a cheque.

John, the valet, sailed for Europe that afternoon.

## XI.

EUGENE SCRANTON has been condemned to death. He will die by electricity—the agent of his confession.

## A WEIRD ENCOUNTER.

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NATURE has endowed me with a cheerful disposition, a good digestion, and a nervous system not easily disturbed. Nevertheless, as I leaned back in my seat in the smoking-car of a late train out of New York some weeks ago, I found myself disgusted with the world, my stomach out of order, and my nerves agitated through over-indulgence during the day in tobacco.

Everything had gone wrong with me since I had left my suburban home in the morning. I had lost a case in court, a loquacious but desirable client had kept me late at the office, and I had eaten nothing since breakfast, save a chicken sandwich at one o'clock. It was 9.30, and, as the train roared through the tunnel, I could not resist the temptation to

quiet the pangs of hunger by another cigar—the tenth I had smoked since breakfast.

Furthermore, the weather was wretched. A cold rain, battered by a sharp, penetrating wind, beat against the windows and promised me a dreary walk when I should set out for home from a lonely station up the road.

In the dim light of a smoking lamp I glanced over an evening newspaper. Death, disaster, crime, and misery were recorded in the headlines that met my eyes. A weird, mysterious epidemic was mowing down its victims by the thousands. I shuddered as I read the death-record for the day.

Was my best friend, Jim MacFarland, still alive, I wondered, as I approached the end of my journey. He was my next-door neighbor, and had been dangerously ill for a week with pneumonia. As Jim had been always rather reckless in his habits I feared that he could not withstand the treacherous inroads of the dread disease that had seized him.

It was in this dismal frame of mind that I left the train. I stood upon the platform a

moment, trying to raise my umbrella in spite of the wind. The cold rain beat upon my face, and I wondered what evil spirit had ever impelled me to leave the metropolis. In vain I looked about me for a cab. The storm had driven our delicate provincial hackmen to the shelter of their homes.

There was nothing to do but to trudge onward for a mile, through mud and moisture, toward the hearth-stone I should have reached some hours before.

I had not gone far when a familiar voice exclaimed:

“Good evening, old man. Won’t you share your umbrella with me?”

I peered into the darkness, and there before me was the face of Jim MacFarland, pale, thin, shadowy, like a vision from the other world. His eyes gleamed with an unnatural fire, and the smile upon his lips sent a strange thrill through my heart. A soft hat rested on the back of his head, and his hair, prematurely gray, hung damp about his ears. His beard showed a fortnight’s growth and added

to his unkempt appearance. He was attired in a long cape-coat, and his thin hands were encased in gloves a size too large for them.

“What are you doing here?” I asked hoarsely, as he slipped an arm through mine, and I felt a chill go through me that the storm could not have caused.

“I’m coming in out of the wet—can’t you see?” he answered with grim humor.

“But I thought you were sick,” I returned. “They told me you were down with pneumonia.”

His ghastly face lost its peculiar smile.

“They told you the truth, old man. I have been very ill—but I’m all right now.”

We strode on in silence for a time. The wind whistled angrily through the trees, the rain pelted us without mercy, and the chill that his presence begot still seemed to freeze my blood.

“You should not be out on such a night as this,” I ventured at length. “You will have a relapse.”

A wild, unearthly laugh echoed through the night.

“A relapse!” he cried. “No, no; the days of miracles are past.”

He must have a fever, I thought. His words were those of a man suffering from delirium. I cast a glance at his face. His eyes were strangely bright, but there was no flush upon his cheeks. His step was firm, though I noticed that his feet made no sound as they struck the rain-covered walk.

“Tell me, Jim,” I began earnestly. “When did you leave your house?”

An expression of bewilderment crossed his face.

“I don’t know,” he answered. “There is no time in eternity.”

He is surely mad, said my mind, and I hurried onward at a rapid gait. I must get him home at once. It was evident that he had escaped the vigilance of his nurse and had wandered forth in the storm and darkness, not knowing where he went,

“Don’t walk so fast,” he said a moment later. “I may not see you soon again. I love you, old man. We have always been good friends, and I wanted to say farewell before I went—before I went—I went—well, I don’t know just where, but I’ll send you word some day.” Then he bent toward me until his ghastly face almost touched mine. “But don’t tell them, old man, that you saw me. They won’t believe it. They will say that you are mad. Do you understand?”

“Yes,” I answered soothingly, though I knew that I had lied to my friend.

“You see,” he continued, “I am a little new to this kind of thing, but I’ll get used to it after a time. Do I look queer?” he asked, peering into my face with his burning eyes.

“Not at all,” I answered, anxious to keep him quiet. “A little pale, perhaps, but you’ll soon be your old self again?”

“Yes, they say we are apt to be rather white at first, but I don’t mind that. However, you are mistaken, old man; I can never be my old self again. In fact, I don’t want

to be. When I get accustomed to this, you know, I'll be better off than before. You follow me?"

"Not exactly," I was obliged to admit.

"But you'll have to," he added, laughing in a blood-curdling way. "You'll all follow me in time."

He seemed to be growing more flighty every moment. The strain on my nerves was becoming oppressive, and I rejoiced as I saw the lights of my house gleam through the driving rain. Just beyond was MacFarland's home, strangely dark it seemed to me. At last I could place my friend in hands that would give him every care, though I felt that his chance for life was slim.

I turned to look at him as the lights from my house dispersed the darkness that had surrounded us. My heart came into my throat, my pulse ceased to beat. Jim MacFarland had disappeared.

Rushing forward I threw open my front door, anxious to obtain help in my search for the escaped invalid.

My wife stood in the hallway, awaiting my return. Her face was very grave.

“He is dead,” she cried, as she caught my hands. “Poor Jim!”

“Who is dead?” I asked in bewilderment.

“Jim MacFarland. He died at six o'clock to-night.”

## REDEEMED BY LOVE.

---

THE spirit of John Ordway stood by the grave within which his earthly form had lain for a day and a night. It was a brilliant morning in May, and the luscious odor of the budding verdure gave to the hallowed spot a fascination that even the solemn tombstones could not destroy. The grass had become a carpet of green velvet. The lilacs and dogwood scented the wandering breeze, and their white and purple splendor pleased the eye. The violet peeped forth here and there, and, in its modest way, added to the beauty that glorified the resting place of those who had passed from the stormy waters of earthly life to the calm haven that awaits the weary soul.

The spirit of John Ordway, new to the realm it had reached, looked about it in

strange disquietude. Could it be that beneath that mound of upturned sod rested the body that had so long pleased the eyes of those who gazed upon it? Could it be that, after suffering the pangs of death, he still could rejoice in the sweetness of the spring, the azure sky, the verdant foliage, the modest flowers that flirted coyly in his sight? It seemed so.

But soon another object broke upon the startled gaze of the shadowy shape standing so close to the new-made grave. Upon the grassless mound John Ordway saw a grotesque figure, an evil, one-eyed sprite, whose grinning face looked up at him and filled him with dismay. Upon the grave the elfish figure danced and waved aloft an empty bottle, and, with gestures mockish, recalled to the onlooking ghost many a mad revel held in his earthly days. Then came another weird, disjointed imp, who held in his outstretched hand a pack of cards. Another followed, carrying a dice-box and rattling mischievously the ivories therein.

And, as time passed by, the mound was covered with these evil sprites, some bearing broken oaths, others good resolves stunted in their growth, while others came trooping forward, shaking their sides with hideous laughter, and reaching upward toward the shrinking ghost the bleeding hearts of men and women he had wronged.

Suddenly the goblin army fled away and by the grave a weeping woman, clad in black, stood motionless, and by her side a baby girl looked up into her face.

“Oh, God, I loved him so!” the woman cried.

“Please, papa, come back to mamma and me,” pleaded the little child.

Then the spirit of John Ordway heard, as though a voice had reached him from afar.

“If such as these have loved thee, thou art not wholly bad. Come, unhappy spirit, and taste the peace and joy that he who saves men’s souls provides.”

## A DEFEATED AMBITION.

---

THE man who was known on earth as Roger Orton had been dead nearly one hundred years. Whenever he thought of this he smiled in an amused way. Time passes so quickly in the spirit land! He had roamed about the universe for almost a century, exploring new worlds, and rejoicing in the freedom that is begotten when the fleshly body is laid aside, as the butterfly abandons the decaying chrysalis.

Roger Orton he still called himself, and once in a while, in his flights through space, he would meet some fellow-spirit who, in the old days on earth, he had known and loved. He remembered vividly a poem he had once admired that in his later knowledge seemed absurd. It ran thus :

Somewhere in desolate, wind-swept space,  
In twilight land, in no-man's land,  
Two hurrying shapes met face to face,  
And bade each other stand.

"And who are you?" cried one, agape,  
Shuddering in the gloaming light.

"I know not," said the second shape.

"I only died last night."

"How little they realize on earth," Roger Orton used to remark, as he quoted the poem to some sympathetic spirit, "that death is only a transition, and that our individuality remains to us for all time. This nameless ghost of Aldrich—I think that was the poet's name—had been dead for a few hours, and did not remember who he was. You and I can understand the nonsense of all this. Come, let's take a look at Mars. They were having a strike on the canals there when I was up there last. I am rather anxious to see what the situation is now."

The two congenial spirits hailed a passing cloud, and, reclining luxuriously on the fleecy couches, sailed upward toward the planet named above.

Roger Orton was one of the most popular spirits in the realm of space. He was always ready to go to the ends of the universe, and his conviction that the final collapse of all creation could have no evil effect upon the myriads of beings who had abandoned their bodily form was a tonic to more pessimistic ghosts, who feared that some day the attraction of gravitation would become repulsion and that the spirit world would suffer as severely as the material.

After his visit to Mars, Roger Orton became thoughtful. "I wonder," he remarked to his companion, a quiet, congenial spirit who had once occupied the form of a beautiful woman, on one of the luxurious luminaries in the belt of Orion; "I wonder if I am still remembered on that dismal planet they call the Earth. I recollect that in former times I was very ambitious. I was clever and industrious, and was desirous of placing my name high on what those funny mortals call the scroll of fame. Thus it was that, while

I plied my pen on a newspaper and produced ephemeral stuff that I despised, I devoted my leisure hours to fiction and poetry. I wrote novels and poems that made a great sensation at the time. I suppose that, although a century has passed, I still have a famous name among the writers of my generation. If you don't mind we'll return to Earth for a few hours, and see how my record stands."

"As you wish, my affinity," whispered the gentle spirit at his side.

Down, down they went, and after a time struck our planet just as the city of New York hove into sight. Assuming for a while an earthly shape, our hero and his companion walked the streets that only one of them had ever known. Buying an evening newspaper with a coin made from the remains of a small asteroid, Roger Orton read the following item:

"Algernon Augustus Orton of this city died yesterday. He was one of the lineal

descendants of Roger Orton, who, a century ago, was the funny man on a local newspaper."

"Come," said Roger to his companion, "let's go back to the realm where justice prevails."

A cloud seemed to cross the sky for a moment, and a sigh, as though a mighty wind was passing somewhere through boundless space, startled the men of earth.

**THE END.**

*Good*



*morning*

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USED

PEARS' SOAP?

# WHAT AILS YOU?

---

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